

# LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.

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## DOVES IN PEACOCKS' FEATHERS!

"A WEDDING AT A FRIENDS' MEETING HOUSE. — A Wedding of a very fashionable character took place on Wednesday at the Friends' Meeting House, Quaker's Friars, Bristol, the contracting parties being Miss MARIANA LOUISA RAKE, youngest daughter of Mr. JOSEPH RAKE, and Mr. DAVID FRY, youngest son of Mr. Jos. FRY. The nuptial party arrived at the meeting house in eleven or twelve carriages, several of which were driven by pairs of greys, with postillions in scarlet liveries. \* \* \* The bride was elegantly attired in a rich train of white corded silk; small fashionable bonnet, almost confined to a wreath or chaplet of orange blossoms, from which fell in graceful folds a long veil of tulle edged with pearls. The five bridesmaids were uniformly attired in dresses of white grenadine, the skirts of which were neatly edged with blue; white *crêpe* bonnets, trimmed with blue; and gracefully-formed peplum jackets, with blue trimmings *en suite*. Mrs. F. J. FRY, sister of the bride, wore an exceedingly handsome dress of pink satin, covered with white grenadine muslin; bonnet of white *crêpe*, with white forget-me-nots and ostrich feather, and bridal veil pending from the back. Miss WINDHAM, a friend of the bride, wore a white grenadine muslin dress tastefully trimmed with pink; white and pink bonnet with flowers to match." — *Bristol Paper*.

Oh, weep for the hour  
When to Hymen's Quaker-bower,  
The FRY led the RAKE, and the RAKE drew  
the FRY:  
The ghost of old GEORGE FOX  
Must have burst his coffin-box,  
And torn his straight-cut locks, such Friends'  
attire to spy!

For the gown of dove-hued silk,  
And the kerchief white as milk  
Folded meekly o'er the bosom, and close-plaited  
muslin cap,  
And poke-bonnet, black or brown,  
The virgin Friend to crown,  
The plain grey shawl for shoulders, and white  
apron for the lap —

Lo, vanities abhorred!  
A train of white-silk cord,  
And, apology for bonnet, an orange-blossom's  
spray!  
A tulle veil edged with pearls,  
O'er a chignon and long curls,  
Called "Kiss-me-quicks" or follow-me-lads,"  
in slang phrase of the day!

And five bridesmaids, FRYS and PEAS-  
SON —  
'Gainst Friends' rule, oh, carnal treason!  
In dresses of white grenadine, the bottoms edged  
with blue —

White *crêpe* bonnets, azure-trimmed,  
White silk peplums, azure-rimmed,  
*En suite* for carnal persons, but "en sour" for  
Quakers true!

Rise, *fainéant* JOHN BRIGHT,  
And these godless garments smite,  
'Gainst apparel and its vanities thy mighty  
trumpet blow!  
But ah — on nearer view —  
*Thou wear'st a collar, too,*  
And a brim of carnal breadth on thy hat hast  
stoop'd to show!

Oh, woe and well-a-day,  
For Friends thus fall'n away  
From the strait path in apparel to the carnal-  
minded road!  
Farewell meekness, mildness, peace,  
That with dove-hued robes must cease,  
And with close-caps and poke-bonnets be in  
lavender bestowed!

— *Punch*.

## THE ARREST OF SINALUNGA.

"More in sorrow than in anger."

SAD and yet stern, a firm but reverent hand  
Italy lays upon her hero's arm,  
Whose love for her spurns Prudence's com-  
mand,  
And sees in policy less help than harm.

In sorrow, not in wrath, she bids him pause,  
Reminds him how e'en love law's rule must  
own:  
How subjects must be subjects, be their cause  
The purest, holiest, e'er to patriot known.

With love that thus love's urging countermands,  
Patience that quenches Passion's fev'rish fire,  
She kisses, as she binds, the martyr's hands,  
Who for THE CAUSE would kindle his own  
pyre.

She honours her great prisoner, and his crime  
Of love too eager, hope and faith too strong,  
To wait the mighty aids of Truth and Time —  
Sure helps — if slow — whose work endureth  
long.

— *Punch*.

## "NON PAN-ANGELI, SED PAN-ANGLICANI."

THERE was a big Synod of seventy-two  
Bishops so bothered they didn't know what to  
do:  
So to do what was wanted they drew to a head,  
Shut their doors, said their prayers, and — did  
nothing instead. — *Punch*.

From the British Quarterly Review.

# RECOLLECTIONS OF THOMAS HOOD.

- (1.) *Memorials of Thomas Hood.* Col-  
lated, arranged, and edited by his Daugh-  
ter; with Preface and Notes by his Son.  
2 vols. Moxon.
- (2.) *The Works of Thomas Hood.* 7 vols.  
Moxon.

'A LONG time ago,' while veritable fields still separated London from Islington, and 'omnibus and rail' were alike unknown; when winter visitors, thankful for the exchange from the blinking oil lamps of the past to the brighter gas, picked their way along muddy paths, or hailed the stage, that, with six insides, jolted leisurely along from High-bury to the Royal Exchange at the rate of three miles an hour; a number of friends, chiefly young people, were accustomed to meet at each other's houses, for conversation and discussion on various subjects. These were pleasant meetings—so thoroughly social: there was far more sociality among acquaintances some forty years ago than now; so, in no elaborate full-dress, or prepared to meet a full-dressed party with 'Jeames to announce the names,' but as a weekly gathering of friends who all felt themselves at home, we met, taking tea together, and enjoying some three hours' conversation on a subject previously ar-  
ranged, and sometimes introduced by a short essay.

It was in the spring of 1820, at one of those meetings, at the house of an Islington friend, that a very young man, apparently in delicate health, first appeared among us. He was a neighbour, we were told, and very partial to literary pursuits; but al-  
though he seemed to take a quiet interest in the discussion, he never joined in it; in-  
deed, we think he was silent the whole evening. When the notice of the next meeting was given, the new visitor was in-  
vited to join it; and very soon after, as a regular member, Thomas Hood took his place among us. 'Thomas Hood'—that pale, solemn, earnest-looking young man, so quiet, so reticent—we had almost said so shy—whoever could dream that the author of the 'Comic Annual,' of the world-famed 'Song of the Shirt,' of that unrivalled 'Eugene Aram's Dream,' was there among us!

Some weeks after, our new member was prevailed upon to give a short essay. The subject was one that afforded no indication of his future bent, either comic or poetical;

for it was on the 'Plurality of Worlds.' After the lapse of so many years, our recol-  
lection of this essay is necessarily slight; but we well remember that it treated the subject in a somewhat scientific manner, and that there was no indication of comic humour.

Very different was his next appearance. With the approach of summer, our meetings ceased—to be resumed in the following autumn; and at the closing meeting of this year, our new member surprised and gratified us by reading a poetical address. The copy, on gilt-edged paper, now yellow with age, lies before us, with the title, 'Address to the Social Literary Society, July, 1820,' written in that beautiful hand which rivalled copperplate engraving, and which, even to his latest days, was always characteristic of Thomas Hood. As the poem, although prob-  
ably not his first, must yet rank among his earliest efforts; and, as it seems to have been lost sight of, we will give two or three extracts from it; the whole, consisting of more than two hundred lines, would be too long for insertion. There is a slight in-  
dication of the peculiar humour of the future author of the 'Comic Annual,' in the open-  
ing lines:—

'Nature, like man, her summer coat puts on,  
Her mourning over, and the winter's gone;  
The Serpentine is clear, Hyde Park is green,  
And verdant trees in Tottil fields are seen,  
And summer's warm and vegetative powers  
Are seen in Covent Garden's fruit and flowers.  
Now rouse the swallows from their torpid  
sleep,

And thro' the air in wanton circuits sweep;  
The butterflies escape from winter cells,  
And shine abroad like other beaux and belles;  
London's gay ladybirds emerge in white,  
And even city drones prepare for flight.

'A vast migrating host,  
They swarm like locusts, all along the coast;  
Princes and pedlars, all pursue the same,—  
Hunters they are, and happiness the game.  
Some look for fortune, in the fickle pack,  
And some for pleasure—on a donkey's back!  
Some go to advertise a pretty face,  
And some to deal in cognac and lace,  
Some seek for husbands, some from husbands  
run,

And some are "done," or "done for," or  
"undone."

For those who cannot go so far, the sub-  
urban fields may offer sources of recreation;  
and it is suggestive to find references to  
Hornsey Wood, and Canonbury Fields, and  
the New River. What would both Thomas  
Hood and Charles Lamb say to the cruel  
submersion of that far-famed stream, and

'the pleasant row of Colebrook,' now actually riverless?

'But chief of all the joys that cockneys know  
In summer days is — gypsy to go.  
Oh, how delightful! underneath a tree  
To sit, and sip a rural-cup of tea!  
All on the grass — for table there is none,  
And taking tea, as Adam might have done.'

Some pleasant lines describing a gypsy party follow, and then the pleasures of country excursions are celebrated; excursions, too, into foreign lands, — although, even thus early, Thomas Hood expresses little sympathy with the then prevailing fashion of visiting France, that land —

'Where shining novelties the giddy please,  
And empty vanity is quite at ease,  
Where folly has its day, and fashion rules,  
The potent sovereign — the Pope of fools.'

These are vigorous lines; and so are these, — well worthy, in their keen feeling for the needy, of the future author of that grim satire on heartless wealth — 'Miss Kilmansegge': —

'Yet oh! that these would ne'er forget the lot,  
The want, the woe, in many a British cot,  
Where manly hearts distil the big round tear,  
And bleed in silence like the stricken deer.  
Shall gay, ungalled hearts go bounding by,  
And heedless wealth its patronage deny?  
Sweep on, sweep on, ye citizens, nor look  
On overflowing tears that swell the brook;  
Seek other homes — in other pastures range,  
And say that tyranny provoked the change.  
Go! make your coward infamy your boast,  
And fly, when patriots are wanted most.'

In conclusion, although now about to separate, yet —

'When dame winter shall in clogs approach,  
Wrapped in Bath cloak, and calling "Hack-  
ney coach,"  
Then this society shall meet anew.'

And, with a few lines of graceful compliment to the principal members, he concludes: —

'And I, to occupy an idle time,  
May teach you all, as now, to prose in rhyme;  
Then hopes the Muse a merrier tale to tell,  
Than now, when doomed to finish with "Fare-  
well!"'

The meetings were resumed in October, and then another poetical address welcomed us. A great portion of this was subsequent-

ly incorporated in Hood's poem on the 'Departure of Summer.' The commencement —

'Summer is gone on swallow's wings,  
And Earth has buried all her flowers,'

is the same in both, but the following lines are, we think, better than those which supply their place in the published copy, —

'There's gloom on autumn's shadowy face  
And mistiness in his pale eyes,  
The tempest blots his painted skies,  
The spoiler's in his dwelling-place;  
And, as the ruthless One bereaves,  
Of all his few, last, golden leaves,  
Along his naked bowers he sighs,  
And grieves, as waning Beauty grieves,  
When each dear charm successive flies.  
Season of Pleasure, then, adieu!  
Till thou shalt visit us anew.  
Yet who, without regretful sigh,  
Can say "adieu," and see thee fly,  
Like some bright fair one, — cold, unkind,  
Nor leaving one sweet smile behind!  
Farewell! Thy birds again shall sing,  
And sunny hours return and bring  
Many a bright and lovely thing.  
Again thy blushing roses bloom,  
And zephyrs flutter on a wing  
Laden with music and perfume.  
Sweet flowers shall be where flow'rs have  
been, —  
As if they had but slept awhile;  
Thy waving bowers be clothed in green;  
Thy skies shall glow, thy waters smile;  
Then farewell summer, yet farewell!  
We hope in other years to find thee —  
But leave, to cheer the glooms we tell,  
Leave Mirth and Pleasure still behind thee.'

In the copy now before us, the lines commencing, 'But say, hath winter, then, no charms?' to 'Hark, those shouts,' follow with but few alterations; then the description of winter sports, but given at greater length, 'hunt the slipper,' 'blindman's buff,' and 'forfeits,' each receiving due notice. The conclusion is wholly different. After referring to 'graver' meetings, and recalling the various subjects which had engaged the attention of the Society, he concludes: —

'Happy are those who thus can meet,  
And find such conversations sweet!  
Happy are those who thus can choose  
Such blameless themes, that oft amuse,  
And oft improve. No stories sprung  
From Envy's heart to Satire's tongue,  
No praise oblique that ends in blame,  
No scandal loving to condemn  
All virtue but her own — the gem  
That's foiled upon another's shame.  
No pride, disdain to resign



It's very errors for the right ;  
No anger with more heat than light,  
Nor vanity that burns to shine.

'Thus then we meet ; and if ye bring  
Wit, Beauty, Sense, and everything  
Ye took away — and Mirth and Health,  
That have more honey-sweets than wealth, —  
Welcome, thrice welcome ! whether come  
From Paris, Islington, or Rome,  
Or even Como's far-famed lake,  
A warm and hearty welcome take !'

We have been, perhaps, rather too lavish of our extracts, but there is always a peculiar interest in the first productions of a writer destined ere long to achieve a wide fame, to — in those modest efforts, intended to gratify but a small circle of friends of the poet who, in after years, shall hold thousands spellbound by his numbers.

At this opening meeting in October, 1820, Mr. Hood provided almost the whole entertainment of the evening. Not only did he give us the pleasant poetical address, but a story in verse, entitled 'Juliet.' This, under the name of 'Bianca's Dream' — but slightly altered — subsequently appeared in the second series of 'Whims and Oddities ;' but, as originally given, it was followed by a capital appendix of 'Learned Notes, after the Manner of the Learned Martinus Scriblerus.' In these, we had the first indication of Hood's singularly varied humour. The solemnity with which he marshalled his authorities, the whimsically recondite names he bestowed on them, the quaint learning he displayed, really astonished some of the members, although their reading had lain greatly among the writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Altogether, that first meeting of our little Society convinced every one that gifts, which 'the world would not willingly let die,' were possessed by that quiet, unpretending young man. 'Depend upon it,' said one of them to us, 'Thomas Hood will soon be a name in our literature.'

During the winter and spring, Thomas Hood frequently provided amusement for us. His first contribution was an essay upon 'Independence of mind,' — of this we have but slight recollection ; his next was 'The Journey of a Cockney from Islington to Waterloo Bridge,' which, subsequently, under the title of 'A Sentimental Journey,' was one of his earliest contributions to the 'London Magazine.' The 'Praise of Ignorance,' which appears in the first series of 'Whims and Oddities,' was also read at one of our meetings ; and a general discussion on 'Pastoral Poetry'

produced, shortly after, a humorous essay on Pope's pastorals, concluding with a 'Modern Bucolic,' which the reader may see in 'Hood's Own,' where Huggins and Duggins celebrate the charms of their respective shepherdesses in the homeliest and most laughable verse.

It was in the spring of 1821, that the most important event of Thomas Hood's literary career took place. In consequence of poor Scott losing his life in a duel with Lockhart, the 'London Magazine,' of which he had been editor, became the property of Messrs. Taylor and Hessey, and they invited Hood to assist in the editorship. It seems to us rather doubtful whether the 'London,' under its new proprietorship, had a 'regular' editor. We never heard, either from general report or from Hood himself, the name of any literary man mentioned as holding the office ; we therefore think that, as then was the case with the 'Retrospective Review,' one of the firm acted in that capacity, the well-known ability of the whole staff of contributors limiting the duties of editor to little more than arranging the order of the articles, and seeing them through the press. This will account for a young and unknown writer being entrusted so early with a department strictly belonging to the editor — the answers to correspondents.

In his pleasant 'Literary Reminiscences,' Thomas Hood tells us with what delight he exchanged the profession of engraving for that of literature, how the correction of the proofs was to him a labour of love, and how he 'received a revise as though it had been a proof of regard.' But to take some part in the magazine was the very height of his ambition ; and this was ere long provided for him, when, under the title of 'The Lion's Head,' his singularly humorous talent found scope in imagining quaint titles to pretended articles, which were rejected with the most laughable solemnity. Occasionally a short poem was accepted with much gravity. We think we are correct in saying that all these were his own.

Meanwhile, Thomas Hood still attended the meetings of our Society, quiet and unobtrusive as ever ; indeed, it was only by chance that we heard of his new engagement. We well remember congratulating him on a change which must have been so congenial, but with the modesty that always accompanies genius, he earnestly begged us not to tell our friends. During the first year he was remarkably reticent as to the 'London ;' subsequently it was a pleasant subject of conversation both to him, and to

his *personal* friends, but only to them. We remember, almost as though it were but yesterday, the glee with which, on returning from Fleet Street in the evening, he would often call in, and take out his pocket-book, well crammed with letters, or fragments of 'copy,' and show us the autographs of those various celebrities who had given to the 'London' a standing higher than had ever yet been attained by any magazine. And pleasant was it to look at the very handwriting of Elia, at a time when every periodical was celebrating his praises, and every one asking, 'Who is Elia?' or the copy, with its unmistakable impress—the laudandum stain—of one of De Quincey's wild visions; and to listen to the enthusiasm, real enthusiasm, with which he, who had already taken no mean place among writers, told us of his delight when he looked, 'bodily' upon those who had been but a distant dream. How delightfully, full sixteen years after, in his admirable letters on 'Copy-right and Copywrong,' does he refer to these days:—

'My own obligations to Literature are a debt so immense, as not to be cancelled, like that of Nature, by death itself. Adrift early in life upon the great waters—as pilotless as Wordsworth's blind boy in the turtle-shell—if I did not come to shipwreck, it was that, in default of paternal or fraternal guidance, I was rescued, like the ancient mariner, by guardian spirits, "each one a lovely light," who stood as beacons to my course. Infirm health and a natural love of reading happily threw me, instead of worse society, into the company of poets, philosophers, and sages—to me good angels and ministers of grace. From these silent instructors—who often do more than fathers, and always more than godfathers, for our temporal and spiritual interests—from these mild monitors, I learned something of the divine, and more of the human religion. They were my interpreters in the House Beautiful of God, and my guides among the Delectable Mountains of Nature. They reformed my prejudices, chastened my passions, tempered my heart, purified my tastes, elevated my mind, and directed my aspirations. I was lost in a chaos of undigested problems, false theories, crude fancies, obscure impulses, and bewildering doubts—when these bright intelligences called my mental world out of darkness like a new creation, and gave it "two great lights," Hope and Memory—the past for a moon, and the future for a sun."

And how heartily does he conclude with those noble lines of Wordsworth—himself one of the 'guardian spirits' to whom the grateful writer refers:—

'Blessings be with them, and eternal praise,  
Who gave us nobler loves, and nobler cares—  
'The poets, who on earth have made us heirs  
Of truth, and pure delight by heavenly lays!  
Oh! might my name be numbered among  
theirs,  
How gladly would I end my mortal days!'

The aspiration has been fulfilled; and the name of Thomas Hood stands, and will stand, in company with those to whom he looked up with such loving reverence.

Had Hood, like Wordsworth, given us a poem similar to the 'Prelude,' we are sure that among the influences forming his character, most important in its moulding power, as well as most abiding in its results, he would have placed his friendship with Charles Lamb. From that evening, when, sick and sorrowful, he sat alone, as he has told us, and his hand was first grasped by the friendly Elia, to that day when, with 'thoughts that lie too deep for tears,' he stood beside the grave in Edmonton churchyard, Charles Lamb was emphatically the 'guardian spirit,' watching with never-failing interest over the career of that gifted young man. There was great congeniality of taste and feeling; great similarity of mind, too, in that quick perception of the ludicrous, combined—as it so rarely is—with an even keener perception of the beautiful and poetical. No wonder Thomas Hood ever enshrined Elia and all his sayings and doings among his most cherished memories, and honoured him as a father. We well remember the delight with which we were told of that first visit to Colebrook Cottage, and the hearty welcome he received from both Lamb and his sister.

Nor were the benefits derived from association with Charles Lamb, and his gifted circle of friends, the only advantages. In Elia's most miscellaneous, but capital library, Thomas Hood found 'fresh fields and pastures new,' peculiarly suitable to his tastes and feelings. Those old dingy folios, those thick, squat quartos, from which the fine-gentlemen readers would have turned with contempt, were lovingly opened by him; and under the guidance of the writer best read in, and from his fine poetical feeling, best fitted to appreciate the priceless wealth of our early literature, the future author of the 'Plea of the Midsummer Night Fairies' soon became an enthusiastic student of the great poets and dramatists of Elizabeth's age. These were his exemplars; and how diligently he followed them may be seen in all his serious poems—

poems, even to the present day, with the exception of two or three of the shorter ones, sadly unappreciated, save by a few.

It was soon after this most happy acquaintance with Charles and Mary Lamb, that Thomas Hood took a really high place in the magazine that numbered among its contributors the first names in our literature. We think we can trace the influence of Charles Lamb's quaintly poetic mind in the contributions during 1822. That fine 'Hymn to the Sun,' and 'Lycus the Centaur,' — almost believed by some readers to have been written by Coleridge; and the less known, but gracefully quaint story of 'The Two Peacocks of Bedford,' are among these. In this last are many stanzas of exquisite beauty, scarcely surpassed even in his palmiest days. Here is an extract: —

'Oh, that the vacant eye would learn to look  
On very beauty, and the heart embrace  
True loveliness, and from the Holy Book  
Drink the warm-breathing tenderness and  
grace  
Of love indeed! Oh, that the young soul took  
Its virgin passion from the glorious face  
Of fair religion, and addressed its strife,  
To win the riches of eternal life!

'Doth the vain heart love glory, that is none,  
And the poor excellence of vain attire?  
Oh go, and drown your eyes against the sun —

'Oh, go, and gaze, — when the low winds of  
even  
Breathe hymns, and Nature's many forests  
nod  
Their gold-crowned heads; and the rich blooms  
of heaven,  
Sun-ripened, give their blushes up to God;  
And mountain-rocks and cloudy steeps are riven  
By founts of fire, as smitten by the rod  
Of heavenly Moses, — that your thirsty sense  
May quench its longings of magnificence!'

But while thus advancing in his career as a writer of both verse and prose of no ordinary merit, Thomas Hood was still as simple in manners, and modest as ever. We well remember one evening, soon after 'Lycus' had appeared, he called in with the usual pocket-book well-filled with notes and specimens of copy from some other of the contributors to the 'London;' and while our companions were examining these interesting stories, the writer took up a little note from Barry Cornwall, addressed to 'dear Lycus;' — and 'Who is Lycus?' we asked. 'Myself,' was the quiet reply. 'You wrote "Lycus"! — why, it has been assigned to Coleridge himself!' 'It has; but that has been indeed too complimenta-

ry, for I wrote it. You see, he has been very kind' (referring to Barry Cornwall's note) 'in his admiration.' Thus simply, almost humbly, did Thomas Hood receive the praises of his brother contributors, — praises that would have turned the heads of most young poets not half so gifted as he.

It was pleasant during this time to hear Hood talk about Elia; 'him,' as he remarks in those pleasant 'Literary Reminiscences,' who was 'not only a dear and kind friend, but an invaluable critic; one whom, were such literary adoptions in modern use, I might well name, as Cotton called Walton, my father.' And pleasant were the accounts of the celebrated men he met there. Living within a mere stone's throw of Colebrook Cottage, Thomas Hood seems to have spent almost every disengaged evening there, always welcome, alike to Elia and to Bridget. He has told us of his disappointment at the conversation of Wordsworth — not with his poetry, as that beautiful sonnet addressed to him testifies, — and his admiration of Coleridge, that 'old man eloquent, pacing to and fro, with his fine flowing voice making glorious music.' With Coleridge he seems to have been remarkably interested, and to have looked up to him with a loving reverence, inferior only to that which he felt for Charles Lamb.

'It is not with a hope my feeble praise  
Can add one moment's honour to thine own,  
That with thy mighty name I grace these lays;  
I seek to glorify myself alone: —  
For that some precious favour thou hast shown  
To my endeavour in a by-gone time,  
And by this token I would have it known  
Thou art my friend, and friendly to my rhyme!  
It is my dear ambition now to climb  
Still higher in thy thought.'

Thus he writes in the dedicatory sonnet prefixed to his 'Hero and Leander,' and we may well imagine the pleasure, with which Coleridge received the tribute.

During the winter of 1822-3, our literary society languished. We lost one of our members by death, and two or three by removals. Thomas Hood, however, still occasionally attended and gave us some of the comic poems that were subsequently inserted in 'Lion's Head.' He gave us also the article on 'Dreams,' which appeared in the first series of 'Whims and Oddities,' but it was, we think, combined, with another paper. Meanwhile, other attractions withdrew him from our circle, for in the sister of that delightful contributor to the 'London' who claimed the pseudonym of 'Edward Herbert,' he found that excellent wife and

judicious friend, whom he ever affectionately acknowledged as the chief blessing of his life. On his marriage, in 1824, Hood quitted Islington; and as we were not then acquainted with the lady he had married, we saw him but seldom during the following two or three years. We were not, however, forgotten, as we ere long found, when copies of the 'Odes and Addresses to Great People, and subsequently of his 'Whims and Oddities,' with kind notes of remembrance reached us.

It were much to be wished that these 'Odes and Addresses' could be accurately assigned to their respective authors; for the work was a joint production of Thomas Hood, and his brother-in-law, (John Hamilton Reynolds,) the Edward Herbert above mentioned. The addresses to Elliston and Maria Darlington were certainly not by Hood; and we think, that when some years after he referred to the work, he told us that the ode to Dr. Ireland was his, but that that to Sylvanus Urban belonged to Reynolds. It must have been especially gratifying to Hood to find these clever *jeux d'esprit* so heartily admired,—indeed, enjoyed by Coleridge, who persistingly assigned their authorship to Charles Lamb. We are not so greatly surprised at this, for we think that in his earlier comic writings much similarity to Lamb's may be traced. We were much struck with this when lately turning over the first series of 'Whims and Oddities.' There is the same quaint, fanciful, but *quiet* humour to be traced in many of them, that formed the charm of Elia's essays. 'The Complaint against Greatness,' and 'The popular Cupid,' and 'that excellent piece of foolery,' 'Walton Redivivus,' may be referred to among others. And here we may ask, why, although many inferior articles are retained, these, together with some others, have been omitted in the general collection of Hood's works?

Those very clever 'Whims and Oddities' lose, however, much of their suggestive humour, by being separated in the collected works from the capital wood engravings, with their most happily-chosen mottoes. The squaw, with her precious adornments of fish-bones and dog's teeth, her head surmounted by the huge marrow-bone, and the motto, 'Rich and rare were the gems she wore; the ragged urchins swarming in wild glee round the empty sugar cask inscribed, 'Oh! there's nothing half so sweet in life; the prize ox toiling along, wearing the patience of his hump-backed, one-legged drover, so truly exclaiming, 'O that this too, too solid flesh would melt!' and 'Piscator,'

never to be forgotten as he stands by the New River in his huge buckled shoes, spectacles on nose, about to take the infinitesimal fish so tenderly off the hook, and place it safely in the narrow-necked bottle! The wonderful humour of Hood's woodcuts often seems to us superior to his comic verse.

We may here remark that Thomas Hood drew remarkably well. We have seen beautiful pen sketches, thrown off with the ease of a practised artist; and he also etched beautifully. Indeed, had he continued in his original profession—engraving—we have no doubt that he would have taken a foremost place in it. In his earlier days he painted remarkably well in water colours. Some were beautiful little things, so delicately finished. One we well remember, even after the lapse of so many years, for its poetic beauty—a lake, with two swans sailing into a bright stream of moonlight, and in the background, a large tower girdled round by a giant serpent. He told us it was intended for a fairy tale, which we think he said was not yet written. It evidently had reference to that pretty little poem, the 'Two Swans,' who from the shadow of that grim tower, and its guardian serpent—

'—sailed into the distance dim,  
Into the very distance—small and white,  
Like snowy blossoms of the spring that swim  
Over the brooklet.'

Hood's pictorial power was indeed great; and we have often thought, that had he exchanged the pen for the pencil, he would, as an artist, have achieved no common fame; that we might have seen another Hogarth, with all his truth, his deep feeling, his stern power, combined with a delicacy of perception, a poetic range of thought, to which that great painter could lay no claim.

In 1827, the 'Plea of the Midsummer Fairies,' together with 'Hero and Leander,' and some other poems, appeared in a small volume. It was with feverish anxiety that Hood watched its reception by the public, who had so eagerly welcomed his comic poems. He had taken high place in an inferior department, and he now sought to assert his claim as a writer of sweet and noble verse,—as the emulator of those glorious poets, whom from boyhood he had loved, and whom, under the guidance of Charles Lamb and Coleridge, he had of late learnt so keenly to appreciate. But the public, with strange caprice, refused to welcome the modest little volume; and while 'Whims and Oddities' reached a third edition, the

'Plea of the Midsummer Night Fairies' met with few purchasers; and it was eventually withdrawn from the publishers, to save it, as Hood bitterly said, from the butter shops. The rejection of a volume containing so much sweet and graceful poetry seems indeed strange; — perhaps somewhat of excuse might be found, if we remember that, supplied as the public had been, some thirty or forty years ago, with narrative poems, readers were scarcely prepared for a poem of any length, which told no story, but merely described Titania and her attendant elves, and Shakspeare pleading their cause so eloquently against destroying Time. Still, had there been aught of poetic appreciation among the mass of readers, this graceful 'Plea' would not have asked a hearing in vain.

Soon after, we renewed our more intimate acquaintance with Thomas Hood, and formed a friendship with his excellent wife; continued through many years, though closed too early by her death, so soon after that of her gifted husband. Many a pleasant remembrance rises to our mind, as we look back upon the evenings spent with them in Robert Street, Adelphi. It was scarcely until we saw Hood in his own house, that we were able fully to appreciate his singular conversational talents. Always reserved in general society, it was when surrounded by some half-dozen personal friends in his home, and by his own fire-side, that the stream of his conversation would flow on in such pleasant variety, — now referring to the current literature of the day, or to the topics then engaging public attention; now playfully quizzing some friend, often by giving him credit for some opinion or taste which he particularly disliked; or telling some strange story with such minuteness of detail, that we were fain to believe it true, until his sly laugh proved that we had interested ourselves in what was only 'the coinage of the brain.'

The new discoveries and inventions — of which there were many about this epoch — also furnished him with themes of continual *badinage*. The opinion, seriously maintained some forty years ago by a continental chemist, that as diamonds were a species of carbon, coals might be turned into diamonds, afforded him much amusement; and merrily did he speculate on the strange effects that might follow, if coals became dear and diamonds cheap. The Horticultural Society, too, had just offered prizes for the cultivation of new fruits and vegetables, and solemnly he would predict, that as there was a bread-fruit tree, ere long

there would be a bread and butter tree, and perhaps by successful grafting even a plum pudding tree! We believe he made a slight sketch of the last, with merry children dancing, as well they might, around it. But the most constant subject of his merriment was the railway, as yet scarcely known. How he used to 'quiz' Mrs. Hood's mother, a very clever old lady, who enjoyed the fun as much as he did, with an apocryphal picture of the 'woes and pleasures' of railway travel; how the steam might land them upon the dome of St. Paul's, instead of conveying them to Camberwell; how some spiteful ostler, enraged that, like Othello, his occupation was gone, might fill the Tender with slates, and the Train for want of fuel come to a standstill, just when the passengers, watch in hand, were anticipating their dinners! But then the pleasures — surely with so much boiling water, the old ladies might obtain a cup of tea, and by a little arrangement of the fireplace, perhaps the stoker, with a clear fire, might provide toast also. Moreover, barrel-organs could be played by steam; and with most laughable whimsicality, he would suggest appropriate tunes for the 'solace' of the passengers. Never was there a companion so delightfully amusing as Thomas Hood, when enjoying himself among his friends. We remember one night, when he met a small party at our house, how he kept us two or three hours at the supper table, all unwitting of the time that had passed. One of our guests on that occasion, who had met most of the 'conversational lions' of the day, assured us that Thomas Hood surpassed them all — even Theodore Hook — then, by common consent, the chief of conversationalists.

Towards the close of 1828, Thomas Hood first appeared as an editor. It was now the palmy days of the 'Annals' — those pretty little drawing-room books, with their often excellent engravings, and gay silken binding — little books, for which the first author of the day did not disdain to write. He was requested to edit 'The Gem,' a new candidate for public favour, and most anxious was he for success in this hitherto untried department. For an editor, as in after years it was proved, Hood was admirably fitted. With his fine taste, his generous appreciation of every fellow-writer's merits, together with his practical knowledge, we all doubted not but that 'The Gem' would take a very high place indeed, if not the foremost. But unfortunately, notwithstanding his fine artistic taste and knowledge, the selection of the plates — a



very important part, inasmuch as the character of the Annual greatly depended on them — was confided to an artist, of some merit certainly, but, who, as an animal painter, was entirely unfitted to select pictures suitable for the dainty volume intended to lie on a lady's table. No wonder he was disheartened when he found that of the whole fourteen plates there was not one from any celebrated picture, not one that rose above the most commonplace mediocrity.\*

Thomas Hood, however, strove manfully; he summoned his literary friends to his aid, persuaded Sir Walter Scott to supply an illustrative poem; and if a large sale be a proof of excellence, the 'Gem' took high place, for the first edition of 5,000 copies was followed by the sale of 2,000 more. Still, Hood never felt much satisfaction at his success, although he alone of all the rival editors could number Sir Walter Scott among his contributors, and could point to Charles Lamb's beautiful lines, 'On an infant dying as soon as born,' (written upon Hood's first child), and still more, to his own unrivalled 'Eugene Aram's Dream.' Strange was it, but such was the public caprice, that neither of these two poems awakened much general attention. Some critics there were who could appreciate both, and heartily awarded them their just tribute of admiration; but slowly, very slowly, did 'Eugene Aram's Dream' steal into notice, while not until a year or two before the gifted writer's death did we hear him with quiet exultation remark, that he had at length, by it, established a nobler claim to celebrity than that of the mere author of the 'Comic Annual.'

Towards the close of 1829, Thomas Hood quitted Robert-Street for Winchmore Hill. Charles Lamb's removal to Enfield we be-

lieve to have been one great inducement to this change. Hood was, however, always fond of the country; and the walks and rides about Winchmore Hill were, some thirty years ago, very beautiful. The pleasant transition from a remarkably dull town-house, to what then was quite a country residence, was not sufficient to induce him to resume his more serious, more poetical 'vein.' The keen disappointment he still felt at the failure of his 'Plea,' now aggravated by the very slow and languid appreciation by the public of his 'Eugene Aram,' seems almost to have determined him from henceforth to become exclusively a comic writer: accordingly during this year he wrote several humorous little things for an entertainment given by Matthews, and also projected his 'Comic Annual.' This new adventure was indeed 'a great success;' the first edition sold off during the first week, and a second edition almost as rapidly.

Looking at the 'Comic Annual for 1830,' we are scarcely surprised at its great popularity. The other Annuals had in the course of six or seven years nearly 'lived their day,' although several lingered on some seasons later; but there was a growing tendency among the editors to make them, so 'prodigiously genteel,' that few writers, save the very sentimental, cared to write for them. Naturally enough, people liked a merry laugh at Christmas; and although perhaps a mixture of the grave and gay might have been better, still, amusement provided by such a 'high priest of the comic' as Thomas Hood could not but be acceptable. And there were many good things in this little volume, most of them subsequently incorporated in 'Hood's Own.' The 'Letter from an Emigrant,' the 'Report from Below,' and that capital 'Letter from a Market Gardener,' detailing all his whimsical horticultural experiments, which he thinks might 'be maid transactionable in the next reports,' are among these; but the plates, we think, are even superior to the letterpress. 'The Spent Ball,' with the thoroughly 'used-up' family; 'Soaporifics and Sudorifics,' with the old washerwoman, gin-bottle beside her, so truly Hogarthian; and the 'Constable's Miscellany;' while in others, the imaginative mingles largely with the comic. That strange figure, 'Io after Vaccination,' the womanly form so strangely changing into the animal; and that piled-up mass of rock and stones, which combined, form the scowling features of the mysterious 'Captain Rock,' show how the poetic ele-

\* This Annual had certainly a rather zoological character; for among the illustrations were four very fine horses, five dogs of various kinds, and a most respectable donkey. The rest of the plates were far inferior; among them was a lackadaisical 'May Queen,' all flowers and ribbons; and, we suppose by way of contrast, another of a most lugubrious widow with a doleful-looking little boy. Poor Hood was sadly abused for the short paper which, under the name of Charles Lamb, he appended to this. Forgetting that widows have been objects of laughter, even from the days of the widow of Epheesus, and wilfully blind to the obvious *badinage*, the writer was pelted with hard names, by a dozen anonymous scribblers. This might have been passed over with contempt; but the proprietor, settling at naught every literary courtesy, allowed a mawkish copy of verses to appear in the following volume, in which the writer was complimented as being among the 'fools who gaze and jest' — appropriate epithets, truly, to be applied to Charles Lamb, whose name had been affixed.



ment would continue to assert itself, although pressed down by the constant demand for the ludicrous.

In 1831, another volume of the 'Comic Annual' appeared; its contents, like the former, were transferred to 'Hood's Own'; and in 1832 a third also appeared, dedicated to the new king, William IV. During this time we saw Hood only occasionally, and after his removal to Wanstead but once, and then we were much struck with his worn and anxious appearance, and his sad smile when we congratulated him on the success of his later works. Still, we understood from a friend well acquainted with his affairs that he was going on most prosperously, and we rejoiced, for we hoped he might ere long enjoy that literary leisure which would permit him to give us many more of those poems, 'that the world would not willingly let die.' Alas! at the time of his greatest prosperity, that sad reverse came, from which, in a pecuniary sense, he never wholly recovered, and which inflicted irreparable injury on his constitution.

By the failure of a firm largely indebted to him, Thomas Hood became deeply involved; and although, as he remarked, 'for some months he strove with his embarrassments, the first heavy sea being followed up by other adversities, all hope of righting the vessel was abandoned.' He then, unhappily, as many of his friends thought, determined to emulate 'the illustrious example of Sir Walter Scott, and try whether he could not score off his debts as effectually, and more creditably, with his pen than with the legal whitewash or a wet sponge. . . . With these views, leaving every shilling behind him derived from the sale of his effects — the means he carried with him being an advance on his future labours — he voluntarily expatriated himself, and bade his native land good night.' It is but justice to his memory that this honourable resolution should be recorded in Thomas Hood's own words.

Early in 1835, poor Hood became an unwilling exile, and eventually fixed his residence at Coblenz, whither, soon after, he was followed by Mrs. Hood and their two little children. He, however, bore up bravely; for, as he pleasantly says in his letters to his wife, 'with my dear ones by my side, my pen will gambol through the "Comic" like the monkey who had seen the world. We are not transported even for seven years, and the Rhine is a great deal better than Swan River.'

With the Rhine scenery Thomas Hood was greatly delighted, and often after his

return he would allude to the exquisite beauty of some of the prospects near Coblenz — 'a very garden of Eden,' he would say. But as to the dwellers on the Rhine, the unfavourable opinion he formed, after a very short residence among them, deepened as his sojourn continued. 'The people here are very stupid — mere animals' is an early remark, very soon followed by the discovery, that stupid as they were, they could cheat in everything, from a groschen's worth of plums to a physician's fee. No wonder a man so scrupulously honourable in all his dealings, and so keen a lover of wit, felt disgust at a people 'whose only talk is thalers, thalers, thalers, and whose best attempts at wit and humour are like yeast dumplings a day old.'

Still, firm to his determination of retrieving his fortune, Thomas Hood went bravely on, working hard, notwithstanding severe attacks of illness. He continued his engagement as one of the reviewers in the *Athenæum*, and brought out the 'Comic' for 1836, and that for 1837, besides making preparations for one of the best of his comic works, 'Up the Rhine.' His letters during these two years are very characteristic. It were, however, to be wished that the extracts from them in the 'Memorial,' had been rather less liberal; for although that important personage, 'the public,' may like to know 'all and everything' about literary men, we cannot see that its taste has any right to be gratified at the expense of others.

In the summer of 1837, Thomas Hood bade a final and hearty farewell to Coblenz, where, as he says, he 'had met with nothing but illness, suffering, disgust, and vexation of spirit; and where he had left not a single friend or acquaintance with a sigh.' His next place of residence was Ostend — not a very charming, or a very desirable locality, but possessing two attractions, of no small value in his eyes — the sea, and nearness to England. 'To the latter advantage, he recurs again and again in his letters. 'We may have cards now, with "At Home," upon them; it is indeed but a step across, compared with our late distance; and I felt it quite a comfort to reflect, as I stood upon the sands, that there is but the sea and a few hours between me and England.' 'I am none of those,' he continues, 'who do undervalue, or affect to undervalue their own country, because they happen to have been abroad. There is a great deal of this citizen-of-the-worldship professed now-a-days — in return for which, I think, the English only get ridiculed by foreigners as imbeciles and dupes. Overweening na-

tionality is an absurdity; but the absence of it altogether is a sort of crime.'

The change to Ostend at first promised to be most favourable, and Hood's earlier letters speak of the improved health of all; but ere long a severe attack of what was most probably typhoid fever gave the last blow to a constitution already severely tried; and from henceforth Thomas Hood, with very rare intervals of a few days, became a confirmed invalid. Still, he seems to have been strangely unwilling to believe that the climate was in fault. He walked by the seaside, inhaling the fresh breezes, and went out boating—one of his most favourite pastimes—unconscious, meanwhile, that in his landward walks, and in his home, he was 'breathing deadly poison. It was with a singular mixture of pleasurable and regretful feelings that he used, subsequently, to refer to this residence in Belgium. The exquisite beauty of the distances, the rich colouring of grass and tree,—above all, the gorgeous splendours of the autumn sunsets,—he would describe with a wealth of language that anticipated Ruskin's prose poetry. 'No wonder,' he would say, 'that the Flemish painters were such fine colourists, with those rainbow hues clothing the homeliest scenes with beauty;' it was, alas! a fatal beauty, bearing disease and death.

Of this, at last—would it had been earlier—poor Hood became convinced; and after more than one attack, from which he never wholly recovered, it was decided he should return to England. This step was rendered necessary, too, by a serious difference with the publisher of that pleasant record of German travel, 'Up the Rhine.' It had been quite a success, 1,600 copies having gone off in a fortnight, and doubtless many hundreds would have followed; but, unhappily, law proceedings stopped the sale of the second edition, the copies being all locked up, until the writer's actions against the publisher should be settled. It was, therefore, with no very exhilarating prospects that Hood returned, in the summer of 1840, to England. But, like all our greatest writers, there was, as he told us, no silly 'citizen-of-the-worldship' in him; and, like a true-hearted Englishman, he rejoiced again to take up his residence in his native land. And a hearty welcome did he receive from the literary world, while friends who had not seen him for six years pressed round him. It was, indeed, time that he returned; for, as he remarks in a pleasant letter sent to us just after his arrival, 'As regards my return to England, it has prob-

ably lengthened my days. Change has visited me, as well as my old neighbourhood (Islington), only, instead of being built upon, I have been pulled down. My health has been so shattered in foreign parts, that it would not be a bad bargain for me to change constitutions, even with Spain. A long course of absolute Pythagoreanism and teetotalism, only lately relaxed, has shrunk me from an author to a *pen*, and a very bad one to mend. In such fast, go-a-head times as the present, it is my peculiar misfortune to be tormented by *slow* fever, induced by my residence in Flanders, with, from the same cause, a dash of *ague* in whatever ailment befalls me; and when it rains, I sympathize with the damp like a salt-basket.

Poor Hood! when we first saw him again, we felt that he had not described himself too unfavourably; but still there was a cheerful spirit which made us hope that, surrounded by his old friends, and again breathing his native air, time, and the watchful nursing of his invaluable wife, might re-establish his health. Although he was still harassed by his legal proceedings, his prospects at this time were very encouraging—for numerous requests for literary assistance were made to him; and soon after his return he entered into an agreement with Colburn to become a regular contributor to the 'New Monthly.' Several of his best comic articles appeared here; and among them 'Miss Kilmansegge,' that 'tale so wondrous strange,' with its mingled sarcasm and pathos, and its solemn refrain of 'Gold, gold, nothing but gold.'

A kind of puzzle was 'Miss Kilmansegge' to many people, during its appearance by instalments in the 'New Monthly;' and some even professed to find a political meaning in it. But Thomas Hood, who never felt party politics to be his vocation—although never unwilling on important points to express an opinion—had no such view: his sole aim was, alike by stern reproof and humorous ridicule, mingled with really fine poetry, to paint the unmitigated curse of unblest gold; and powerfully has he painted it. In its grim grotesqueness, 'Miss Kilmansegge' strongly reminds us of those strange and fantastic, but most powerful apologies of the middle ages—'Reynard the Fox,' 'Piers Ploughman,' and such like—where the bitterest satire mingles with the keenest humour, and where the writer, in the very midst of the laughter he awakens, never suffers you to forget his terrible earnestness. But then, these fine works are utterly unrelieved by the passages of gentle

pathos, of delicate beauty, which abound in the modern poem; passages which might take their place in the daintiest selections of poetic jewels.

Perhaps it is that frequent introduction of passages of rare beauty in his comic poems that has rendered Thomas Hood, — considered as a comic writer only, — so widely popular. The lover of sweet poetry, as well as the seeker of mere amusement, finds somewhat worth dwelling upon, — often even in his lightest productions. Our modern humorous writers, too, have been singularly trammelled in their range of thoughts; beyond slight allusions to the current topics of the day, they never pass. But Thomas Hood has taken up in turn every subject that can interest the literary, the political, the scientific world. Take, as an instance, that thoroughly ludicrous ‘extravaganza,’ as it may really be called, the ‘Friend in Need.’ How admirable is the geologist’s ‘field-day’ at Tilgate Forest; — the digging for the veritable dragon with his spines, and terrible claws, and the exultation of the crowd at this corroboration of the orthodox belief as to dragons. ‘Huzza! huzza! huzza! the legends are true, then.’ ‘Not a bit,’ says a stony-hearted professor of Fossil Osteology; ‘look at the teeth: that dragon ate neither sheep, nor tender virgins, nor tough pilgrims; he lived on,’ — What? what? ‘Why, on undressed salads!’ And then the delirious Quaker’s dissertation on music: ‘the low notes are the valleys, the higher notes are the hills, and those very high notes are the blue sky.’ ‘Pshaw! this is a quiz,’ says the courteous reader. ‘Nay, why the most fiddling little fiddler that ever fiddled will fiddle you a landscape and cattle, with a rainbow in the corner, on one string; and what is more, he will tell you that if you have any music in you at all, you will hear the light falling on the cream-coloured cow.’ What capital ridicule is this of the German theory, so gravely put forth some thirty years ago, that each musical instrument represented a particular colour.

“Pray sars, do you not know,” replies the German, “dat de great Hayden in his ‘Creation,’ have made music of de light falling on every ting in de world?” “Yes, as audibly as the ‘Light up! light up!’” at a general illumination. As if the magnificent phenomena described by the sublime passage in Genesis could be represented by a sort of instrumental flare-up! “Aha! you have no musical entousiasm! you do not know vat it is.” “Excuse me, but I do. Musical enthusiasm is like turtle soup: for every quart of real, there are ninety-nine

gallons of mock, and calves’ heads in proportion.”

And then how admirably he ‘shows up’ the cant of artistic amateurship, and the feud caused by the unlucky scarlet mantle of the cardinal, that ‘killed the carnations’ of the beauty, took all the shine out of the ‘Sunset,’ and ‘all the warmth out of my Fire of London!’ And then, again, the whimsical blunders of the stupid workhouse nurse, the ‘consumptious’ man frightening the whole sick ward, because as ‘consumptious is hereditary, it is catching,’ and the sad state of the patient with the ‘scurrilous liver.’ We may, however, remark, that although the ‘Friend in Need’ stands foremost in the wide range of its humorous satire, Thomas Hood in numerous other articles has shown the singular extent of his readings — often comprising subjects known but to few, besides professed students. And then, throughout all this wide range of subjects, and various modes of treatment, what other comic writer, ancient or modern, save Thomas Hood, can advance the proud claim, that there is not one objectionable allusion, not one coarse word?

It is really sad to think that a writer so blameless, and from his very mental constitution so quick to feel an unmerited wrong, should have been for many years the subject of most unjustifiable censures, often actually deepening into abuse. A remarkably clever caricature, ‘The Progress of Cant,’ published by Hood, in the early days of his literary career, first aroused this virulent feeling against him. Irving at that time had just convulsed the whole town with laughter, by his exhibition of himself at Exeter Hall, when he proffered his old gold watch to the chairman, ‘in pledge’ that he would preach some charity sermon. This was quite enough to ensure the celebrated Scotch preacher a place among the motley procession of ‘shams’ that fill the picture. But the indignation of Irving’s admirers knew no bounds when they saw the Geneva cloak side by side with the ragged jacket of the placard-bearer of ‘Try Morrison’s Pills;’ and from henceforth the poor caricaturist received no mercy here, and was very unmistakably threatened with no mercy hereafter.

Foremost among Hood’s persecutors was Rae Wilson, Esq., an amateur writer, and warm friend of Irving, who ceaselessly attacked him with abuse, charging his comic poems with ‘profaneness and ribaldry,’ and for one most innocent allusion to a commonplace figure — the dove with the olive

branch—actually with blasphemy! It is necessary to refer thus to Hood's provocation, for much censure has been cast by religious people on the 'Ode to Rae Wilson,' which, although it would be improved by the omission of two or three passages, is certainly a castigation not a whit too severe for the libeller to whom it was addressed. Had Rae Wilson and his clique alone persecuted the luckless author of the 'Comic Annual,' the annoyance would have been great enough; but unfortunately the old homely proverb of the results of giving a bad name followed. Worthy, but very silly people were told that Thomas Hood was a scoffer at all religion; but instead of inquiring if the charge was really true, they forthwith took upon themselves the right to lecture him. Little can the reader imagine the persecution poor Hood—especially when in ill-health—endured from these self-constituted preachers. We have seen penny tracts, suitable enough to be thrust into the fist of a costermonger, sent to the writer of some of our sweetest poetry, and letters filled with coarsest appeals to 'a hardened conscience' addressed to the author of 'Eugene Aram's Dream.' Sometimes only a single text, but always miserably ill-chosen, written in large hand, would be sent, or a question as to what comfort the 'Comic Annual' would afford him on his death-bed?

That some of these foolish writers really meant well we have no reason to doubt; but it was always a difficulty to us to account for the virulent feeling of the greater number. To Thomas Hood, not unnaturally, *all* the writers seemed linked together in a bond to torment him; and he would sometimes turn upon them like the stag at bay. We could scarcely wonder then at the concentrated bitterness of his sarcasms, or that sometimes the least offending came in for the heaviest share of punishment. We have gone into this subject more at length because not only has there been great misunderstanding on this subject, but few writers have, we think, undergone more unmerited persecution through so many years.

In his quiet lodgings, in Camberwell Road, Thomas Hood continued rather more than a year and a half, when by the death of Theodore Hook he became editor of the 'New Monthly,' and removed to Elm-tree Road, St. John's Wood. This good fortune, as it might well seem to the poor struggling writer, was welcomed with touching thankfulness by him and his wife. 'It would be seriously a comfort at last,' he writes, 'and, I think, go far to cure me of some of my

ailments.' So he set about his new duties with renewed anticipations of success.

Those were pleasant days in Elm-tree Road. Possessed now of a comfortable income, re-united to his old friends, who welcomed him back with a joy equal to his own, and surrounded by an increasing circle of pleasant literary acquaintances, we looked forward to an easy and prosperous career for Thomas Hood, after all his struggles. And for some time our hopes seemed well-founded; and pleasant was it to see with what cheerful determination he set about the duties of editor. For this vocation Thomas Hood was remarkably well fitted; his love of order we have seldom seen exceeded, while his conscientiousness was beyond all praise. Surrounded, as we have seen him, with piles of papers, not littered over the study table, but placed in order—some neatly tied up in packets, and others arranged, either according to their subject, or the date of their receipt—we have felt that the duty of the editor of a magazine was far enough removed from the play-work it is so often fancied to be. 'But surely you cannot read all these over,' we said, pointing one day to a huge pile of anonymous papers. 'Not through,' was his quiet reply; 'but I look over them, for it would be very unjust to reject an article which I had never read a line of; and poor Hood almost made himself a martyr to his conscientiousness.'

The same love of order that presided over his study table marked him throughout; he was neat and painstaking in everything. His notes, even when sent off by the printer's boy, were clearly written; and not only did he, as he has humorously told us, 'mind his p's and his q's,' but his very stops; and during our frequent correspondence, we never remember seeing a single blot, even on his most hurried notes. His pen and pencil drawings were beautifully neat. He seemed, indeed, to have an almost fastidious dislike to anything that looked like a correction or alteration even in his slightest sketches. Many of his wood illustrations give no idea of the accuracy and delicacy of the original drawing. Hood designed an exquisite illustration to his poem of 'The Lady's Dream,' entitled 'The Modern Belinda,' and which formed the frontispiece of the second number of his magazine. This drawing was most beautiful; the dainty smile of the richly-dressed lady, the languid grace of her figure, the long, drooping eyelashes, and *nonchalant* air, were all so finely suggestive. Much of these are lost in the engraving, while where the

drooping eyelash should have been is a coarse blot. We well recollect how greatly vexed Hood was, for his drawing had been much admired by his artist friends, and how heartily he denounced the 'wooden engravers,' agreeing with his friend William Harvey, that the best days of wood engraving would never arrive until artists, as in the days of Albert Dürer, cut their own blocks.

We have before remarked that Thomas Hood had great artistic taste, and this certainly influenced his literary tastes in many ways. Never was there a closer observer of nature, even in apparently very trifling things. We remember finding him one morning quite delighted, for he had just received from a German friend a translation of his 'Eugene Aram's Dream,' and it was always a delight to him to find any recognition of the merits of *that* poem. The general translation was fairly faithful; 'But look,' he said, 'I wrote —

"There were some who ran, and some who leaped,  
Like troutlets in a pool."

'Now, the translator has substituted "little fishes," which is all wrong. Little fishes leap sometimes, but the troutlet leaps *quite out* of the stream, and so is the emblem of boyhood in its utmost joy. How often I have watched these troutlets leaping right out, as though they could not contain themselves!'

In his close and loving contemplation of nature, the writer of the 'Comic Annual' was akin to Wordsworth himself, and in his love of simple pleasures too. As Thackeray, in his genial remarks on him, truly observes, 'the most simple amusements could delight and occupy him.' What pleasant narratives he used to give of his favourite holiday, a gypsy party — not of fine ladies and gentlemen, but of his own family and Dr. Elliot's — to Epping Forest, and a long, bright day in the woods, and a hearty romp with the children! Thomas Hood was always a lover of forest scenery. 'The merry greenwood' ranked next with him to his 'old love,' the sea; so after a romp with the children he would go wandering about — sometimes to botanize with his medical friend, sometimes to seek out some of those new and picturesque nooks, which will always reward the wanderer in the forest glades; sometimes to gather a nosegay of veritable hedgerow flowers — flowers sweeter to him than all the produce of the choicest conservatories.

He sometimes, too, made discoveries, on which he dwelt with much interest — how he made acquaintance with a large number of medicinal plants, at another time with some very curious fungi; and then how, after long search, to the equal delight of himself and his guide, they discovered that strange and mysterious plant, which our forefathers invested with such accumulated horrors, the mandrake. How graphically he described it: the shape, which, with but slight aid of the imagination, took the form of a distorted manikin; the strange noise made by breaking the tough fibres in pulling it up, which might almost be compared to a shriek, and the gush of red fluid which covered his hand. 'It was, indeed, the plant for a witch to gather "i' the moon's eclipse,"' said he; 'no wonder our forefathers held it in horror, for I could easily believe all the tales they told about it.' That 'mandrake' evidently made a deep impression on him, and we think he partly contemplated some wild tale founded upon it, for he took great interest in all old-world superstitions.

We have again and again been surprised to find how well read Thomas Hood was in 'old-world lore.' About this time Lady Charlotte Guest was publishing her very interesting translations from the 'Mabinogion,' — that venerable Welsh collection of stories which seem to have come down from the very remotest antiquity. We were then reviewing them, and remarking to Hood how singularly the eastern and western beliefs in the supernatural coincide — so closely, indeed, as to point to one common source — we were surprised to find how completely 'at home' he was in 'folk-lore' and its various modifications; and in the local superstitions, too, both of England and Flanders. Indeed, we may say, that very few of our writers possessed half the information on such recalcitrant subjects as the author of the 'Comic Annual' had picked up, apparently by mere desultory reading.

We have used the phrase, 'desultory reading,' but it would afford the reader a very inaccurate idea, if it gave him the impression of superficial or careless study; for whatever Thomas Hood set about, it was 'with a will.' We used it rather in the sense of his having no formal method of study — above all, nothing approaching to that system of 'cramming' which was ever his abhorrence. He read, because the subject — whatever it might be — interested him; and he pursued his inquiries, not that he might write a learned or a brilliant ar-



icle, but because, as he went on, he found interesting or suggestive information. Never was there a writer to whom the pursuit of all knowledge was more a labour of love. In his keen delight in literature, he found, as he has told us in his letter to the members of the 'Manchester Athenæum,' a comfort and a solace not to be found elsewhere; and beautifully does he urge upon the young, by his own example, the benefits of 'the timely cultivation and enrichment of that Divine attainment, which it depends on ourselves to render a flower-garden or dead waste — a pleasure-ground visited by the Graces and frequented by the fairies, or a wilderness haunted by satyrs.'

And yet, with all his love of study, all his fine taste, to how many, even up to this time, was Thomas Hood known as but 'the comic writer,' the professor of puns and 'broad grins,' the mere jester with his cap and bells? 'I dined with your friend Hood, yesterday,' said a formal Scotch physician, who was seeking after our London lions, 'but I was quite disappointed, for he never once made us laugh.' We well remember how indignantly we replied, 'Thomas Hood is not a Merry Andrew.' In like manner, people who read some of his most admirable stories in the 'New Monthly,' most persistently ignored the obvious moral because the incidents were 'so laughable.' When that capital tale, 'The Schoolmistress Abroad,' appeared — that story which so graphically paints the lady who, with a dozen accomplishments, is ignorant of the commonest duties of a nurse — Thomas Hood was told by several lady friends how much they had 'enjoyed it.' 'Mrs. —, too, was here to-day,' he said, 'and told me how heartily she had laughed at it! Silly woman! I wrote it to teach her and her daughters that women might as well be usefully brought up — but the writer of the "Comic Annual" is not expected to do more than make people laugh,' he added bitterly.

'The time was, however, at hand when, as Thackeray has finely said, Thomas Hood 'was to speak out of the fulness of his heart, and all England and America listen with tears and wonder.' It is almost needless to say that we refer to 'The Song of the Shirt.' The story of how it was written has been often told, and told correctly enough. The strong sympathetic feeling awakened in the breast of the poet for the poor woman compelled to make shirts at three halfpence a piece. How he brooded over it, and how, after a sleepless night, that wonderful lyric, so homely, but so

powerful, actually in right of its homeliness, was almost improvised. Mrs. Hood, from the first time she read it, prophesied its marvellous success; but the writer seems to have had but a dim idea of its excellence, compared with some of his other poems. Perhaps he was distrustful that the public at large would give him credit for a *serious* poem. We well remember when we saw him the first time after its publication, and congratulated him, he sadly replied, 'I hope it may do good;' adding, 'and now they must see that I can write other poetry than comic.'

A wonderful poem is this 'Song of the Shirt,' as revealing the strong dramatic power of the writer. How sternly is every poetic image kept back, and yet how forcible are its images, although drawn wholly from common life and commonest things. How important 'seam, and gusset, and band,' when pored upon until 'the brain begins to swim;' how desperate the misery when even the skeleton, Death, is scarcely feared! And then, those sad longings after rest and change of scene — not the poet's feeling, dwelling with fond recollection on glorious sunlit skies, and all the beauty and wealth of summer, but the simple yearning to look on the common field flowers, to feel the soft, cool springiness of the green sward, instead of the hard, hot pavement. And thus, throughout, there is not a word, not a figure, but what the most ignorant reader, the merest child can understand; and yet what marvellous intensity of effect!

At the time that 'The Song of the Shirt' appeared in *Punch*, Thomas Hood was busy in projecting what for years he had greatly wished to undertake — a magazine of his own. His editorship of the 'New Monthly Magazine' expired at the close of 1843; he therefore made preparations for his own to come out in January, 1844. The enthusiastic reception of his 'Song of the Shirt,' boded well for the success of this new adventure, and with eager interest did his friends watch the *debut* of 'Hood's Magazine.'

In a very excellent review of our friend and his works, which appeared some time since, it is stated that Hood had dealings with most of the London publishers respecting this magazine, but was unable to find one willing to publish it. This is an inaccuracy, for it was always his wish that *his* magazine should be published like the weekly periodicals, at an office. And not improbably the plan might have answered well, but unfortunately his colleague, who



was to provide the funds, utterly miscalculated the amount required to launch so expensive an adventure as a monthly periodical. The consequence, therefore, was, that although money enough was found to start it, there was not sufficient to meet the subsequent expenses during those months that would intervene between the outlay and receipt of the profits; and thus, by the time the third number appeared, the proprietor was insolvent, while neither editor nor contributors had been paid.

It is difficult to imagine a severer shock than this on the poor striving conscientious editor. The magazine was a decided success. It had been heartily welcomed by the public, and 1,500 copies of the first number taken, — a sale which, an eminent publisher remarked, was altogether unprecedented; and now there were not funds forthcoming, even to pay for the paper and printing of the fourth number. Poor Hood! we sadly recollect the dreadful period of anxiety and disappointment he passed through, although every one was joining in admiration of those two beautiful pieces which he had written — the 'Haunted House,' illustrative of an exquisite picture by Creswick, and which formed the frontispiece to his first number, and the 'Lady's Dream,' inferior in stern power only to his 'Song of the Shirt,' which appeared in the second, with his beautiful illustration of the 'Modern Belinda.' Surely a magazine which could boast two such fine poems, two such fine illustrations, was not to sink without an effort. But few, save Hood's most intimate friends, could tell the distress, the anxiety, the overwhelming labour that effort cost; and when we call to mind the terrible state of suspense in which during the whole month of March he was kept, we feel almost surprised that this life did not earlier fall a sacrifice.

At length we received a short hurried note, from Mrs. Hood, with the welcome news that the magazine had passed into the hands of a new and wealthy proprietor; and it is proof of their high conscientiousness as well as kindly feeling, that even in this hasty note she remarks, what comfort it had given Hood to feel that, from the known respectability of the new proprietor, there would be no future risk of the contributors being unpaid. When we saw Thomas Hood, soon after this new arrangement, we were sadly struck by his worn and weary look. But his spirits were remarkably good; indeed, he seemed to have cast a heavy weight from his shoulders, and was now 'making up' the new number of

the magazine, as though it were a very labour of love. He was contemplating, too, a serial story for it, which he soon after commenced, — 'Our Family' was its title; and had he been spared to finish it, it would we think, have stood high among our domestic tales. Some years before, he had published a novel, 'Tynley Hall'; there was much humour in the dialogue, and some good description, but as a whole, we cannot think it adds to his fame. 'Our Family' is immeasurably superior. Alas! that he should have left it unfinished!

Hood's fame, however, as a poet — as a writer of serious poetry — was still widely extending. In the May number of his magazine appeared that fine lyric, which almost disputes the palm with 'The Song of the Shirt,' 'The Bridge of Sighs.' But just when praise and admiration were loudest, poor Hood sunk under a severe attack of hæmorrhage of the lungs, and even the slightest literary effort was forbidden him. Denied the pen, he again turned to the pencil, and sketched 'The Editor's Apologies,' in a most suggestive group of labelled bottles, pill-boxes, 'fine lively leeches,' and a huge blister. We well remember the sad smile with which Hood showed the neat drawing to us; indeed, we wish that the little sketches he made for his magazine had been re-published, for they are, we think, far superior to those in 'Hood's Own.'

Happily, as summer drew on, Thomas Hood rallied again, and then, while still forbidden all literary exertion, he 'took up the pen,' to write those delightful 'child letters' to the young Elliots. Those capital letters, so brimful of real childish fun, recommending the glass of *warm* sea-water and sugar, 'which would quite astonish you,' and the exhortation to be respectful to the Sandgate donkeys — 'for I knew a donkey once that kicked a man for calling him Jack, instead of John,' and that almost poetical outburst, 'Well, how happy you must be! childhood is such a joyous, merry time; and I often wish I was two or three children — but I suppose I can't be — and wouldn't I pull off my three pairs of shoes and socks, and go paddling in the sea up to my six knees!' What a childlike spirit was Hood's! what a keen enjoyment of simplest pleasures was his! And yet, while flinging himself so wholly into the very joyousness of the little child, his 'Song of the Shirt' was being sung at the corner of every street to tearful women, and the 'Bridge of Sighs' declaimed by first-rate actresses to the refined and highborn, who listened breathlessly.

Ere the end of summer, Hood resumed

his literary pursuits. Notwithstanding the disadvantages of the temporary suspension of his duties as editor, the magazine was advancing steadily, and the kindly aid he received in contributions from Monekton Milnes, Sir Edward Lytton Bulwer, and Charles Dickens, added to the prestige of *'Hood's Magazine.'* As he had offered apologies for the temporary suspension of his duties, so Hood now expressed his pleasure at resuming them, in a most laughable tail-piece, *'Throw Physic to the Dogs.'* The various expressions of the ten dogs, who are devouring the contents of the broken medicine bottles and pills, are admirable, from the pointer, who is spitting out the pills, to the poodle, dolefully turning up his eyes in the last stage of deadly sickness. The sketch is one that we think Landseer himself must have enjoyed. He now mostly illustrated the magazine with two or three *'whimsicalities,'* as they might well be called; and so clever are these, that we greatly regret they have not re-appeared as well as his prose sketches.

Until the autumn of this year (1844), Thomas Hood, although he did not completely recover his former health, had yet such frequent intervals of convalescence, that sometimes we almost thought the forebodings of his medical friend might prove unfounded. But in the autumn he again sunk, and we really think the agitation he felt in the case of poor Gifford White had great share in producing his subsequent illness.

The reader may remember that this was the young man who was convicted of writing a threatening letter to the Bluntisham farmers, and sentenced to transportation for life. The case of this mere youth made a deep impression on Hood, who always viewed transportation as a fearful punishment; and it was in allusion to him that he wrote his *'Lay of the Labourer,'* and that impressive address to Sir James Graham, both of which appeared in the November number of his magazine. The passionate appeal to the Home Secretary, describing the *'one melancholy figure, that flits prominently before my mind's eye'* has been generally supposed to be the eloquent working up of a mere figure of speech; but it was told in solemn truth by Thomas Hood. *'That poor creature,'* he remarked to us, when about to write that address, *'I sometimes see him all the night through;'* and then he described *'that sorrowful vision,'* just as appears in print. That Sir James Graham would not condescend to notice his

appeal distressed him much, and we thought we could perceive in him an unwonted sinking of spirits.

We had some interesting conversations with him about this time; and little would the foolish letter writers who pelted him with tracts believe how many solemn thoughts visited the mind of the writer of the *'Comic Annual'* — how high were his views of human responsibility; how earnest were his endeavours to alleviate the mass of suffering he saw around him; and with what utter self-negation he received the well-earned tribute, now proffered on every side, to the zeal with which he had advocated the cause of *'the poor and them that have no helper.'* While listening to his remarks — always worth listening to, but of late singularly suggestive — we frequently felt that perhaps ere another year came round, he might be no longer among us; and our foreboding was true. During the winter Thomas Hood continued in very weak health; but he added another chapter or two to his story, and drew, although chiefly confined to his bed, several very amusing little tail-pieces for the magazine. One day, asking him how he intended to proceed with his *'Family,'* he said, he should next vaccinate *'the twins,'* and *'then I believe I shall end.'* *'End! why?'* The significant look too plainly told us that Hood felt himself near the end of his work. And so it was; the vaccination is the last chapter.

A short interval of ease seems to have inspired him with a passing belief that his end was not so near, and then he wrote those beautiful lines, which, although tolerably well known, must not be omitted here, as the touching *'swan song'* of Thomas Hood: —

*'Farewell life! my senses swim,  
And the world is growing dim;  
Thronging shadows cloud the light  
Like the advent of the night —  
Colder, colder, colder still  
Upward steals a vapour chill —  
Strong the earthy odour grows;  
I smell the mould above the rose!*

*'Welcome life! the spirit strives!  
Strength returns, and hope revives;  
Cloudy fears, and shapes forlorn,  
Fly like shadows at the morn;  
O'er the earth there comes a bloom,  
Sunny light, for sullen gloom —  
Warm perfume, for vapour cold;  
I smell the rose above the mould.'*

Alas! the prophecy of these beautiful lines was not to be fulfilled. During the three last months of Hood's life, his sufferings were intense, but borne with the most astonishing patience. For some weeks we did not see him, for the slightest exertion in speaking brought on hæmorrhage; and dropsy was soon after added to his sufferings. But when we once again saw him, we felt that his days were numbered; nor for him could we feel aught of regret.

At length our final farewell came: Thomas Hood was in the last stage of bodily weakness, but his trembling hand signed his autograph and the words 'with kind regards,' on one of the proof engravings of his bust, and this he requested us, in the low whisper which he could only use, to give to our mother from him 'with my love, with my kind love.' That engraving, and that autograph, are among our household treasures. It was on the Monday that we wrung the hand of our dear friend, well knowing, alas! it was for the last time; on the Thursday, feeling his end was drawing very nigh, he took his solemn leave of his invaluable wife, and his two young children; and then, clasping Mrs. Hood's hand, he said, 'Remember, Jane, I forgive all — all — as I hope to be forgiven;' and then, turning from earth to heaven, he faintly whispered, 'O Lord! say, Arise, take up thy cross and follow me.' He soon after sank into a slumber which deepened into death, on Saturday, May 3rd, 1845.

#### ARE THE CHILDREN AT HOME—

EACH day when the glow of sunset  
Fades in the western sky,  
And the wee ones, tired of playing,  
Go tripping lightly by,  
I steal away from my husband,  
Asleep in his easy-chair,  
And watch from the open doorway  
Their faces fresh and fair.

Alone in the dear old homestead  
That once was full of life,  
Ringing with girlish laughter,  
Echoing boyish strife,  
We two are waiting together;  
And oft, as the shadows come,  
With tremulous voice he calls me,  
"It is night! are the children home?"

"Yes, love!" I answer him gently,  
"They're all home long ago;"  
And I sing, in my quivering treble,  
A song so soft and low,  
Till the old man drops to slumber,  
With his head upon his hand,  
And I tell to myself the number  
Home in a better land.

Home, where never a sorrow  
Shall dim their eyes with tears,  
Where the smile of God is on them  
Through all the summer years,  
I know! Yet my arms are empty,  
That fondly folded seven;  
And the mother heart within me  
Is almost starved for heaven.

Sometimes, in the dusk of evening,  
I only shut my eyes,  
And the children are all about me,  
A vision from the skies, —  
The babes whose dimpled fingers  
Lost the way to my breast,  
And the beautiful ones, the angels,  
Passed to the world of the blessed.

With never a cloud upon them,  
I see their radiant brows, —  
My boys that I gave to freedom,  
The red sword sealed their vows!  
In a tangled Southern forest,  
Twin brothers, bold and brave,  
They fell; and the flag they died for,  
Thank God! floats over their grave.

A breath, and the vision is lifted  
Away on wings of light;  
And again we two are together,  
All alone in the night.  
They tell me his mind is failing;  
But I smile at idle fears:  
He is only back with the children,  
In the dear and peaceful years.

And still as the summer sunset  
Fades away in the west,  
And the wee ones, tired of playing,  
Go trooping home to rest,  
My husband calls from his corner,  
"Say, love, have the children come?"  
And I answer, with eyes uplifted,  
"Yes, dear: they are all at home!"  
— *Atlantic Monthly.*

## CHAPTER LX.

## MR. DINGWELL THINKS OF AN EXCURSION.

If Mr. Dingwell had been the most interesting, beautiful, and, I will add, wealthy of human beings, instead of being an ugly and wicked old bankrupt, Messrs. Goldshed, Levi, and Larkin could not have watched the progress of his complaint with greater trepidation, or hailed the first unequivocal symptoms of his recovery with more genuine delight. I doubt if any one of them would have experienced the same intense happiness at the restoration of wife, child, or parent.

They did not, it is true, re-assemble in Mr. Dingwell's apartments in Rosemary-court. There was not one of those gentlemen who did not set a proper value upon his own life; and they were content with the doctor's report. In due course the oracle pronounced Mr. Dingwell out of danger, but insisted on change of air.

Well, that could be managed, of course. It *must* be managed, for did not the doctor say, that without it the patient might not ultimately recover. If it could have been dispensed with, the risk would have been wisely avoided. But Mr. Dingwell's recovery depended on it, and Mr. Dingwell must be *made* to recover.

Whither should they send him? Stolen treasure or murdered body is jealously concealed by the malefactor; but not more shrinkingly than was Mr. Dingwell by those gentlemen who had him in charge. Safe enough he was while he remained in his dingy seclusion in Rosemary-court, where he lay as snugly as Asmodeus in the magician's phial, and secure against all but some such accident as the irruption of the student Don Cleophas Leandro Peres Zambullo, through the skylight. But where was to be found a rural habitation — salubrious and at the same time sufficiently secret. And if they did light upon one resembling that where the water-fiends played their pranks —

"On a wild moor, all brown and bleak,  
Where broods the heath-frequenting  
grouse,  
There stood a tenement antique —  
Lord Hoppergollop's country house.

"Here silence reigned with lips of glue,  
And undisturbed, maintained her law,  
Save when the owl cried — 'Whoop! whoop!  
whoop!'  
Or the hoarse crow croaked — 'Caw! caw!  
caw!'"

If I say they did find so eligible a mansion for their purpose, was it likely that their impracticable and incorrigible friend, Mr. Dingwell, would consent to spend six weeks in the "deserted mansion" as patiently as we are told Molly Dampling did?

I think not. And when the doctor talked of country air, the patient joked peevishly about the "grove of chimneys," and "the sweet shady side of Pall-Mall."

"I think, Mrs. Rumble," said he, one day, "I'm not going to die this bout at all events. I'm looking better I think — eh?"

"Looking very bad, sir, please. I can't see no improvement," said Sarah Rumble.

"Well, ma'am, you try to keep my spirits up, thank you. I'm shut up too much — that's the sole cause of it *now*. If I could creep out a bit at night."

"God forbid, sir."

"Thank you, ma'am, again. I say if I could get out a little I should soon get my strength back again; but sitting in this great padded chair I might as well be in bed; can't go out in the daytime you know — too many enemies. The owl's been moulting, ma'am — devilish sick — the moulting owl. If the old bird could flutter out a bit. I'm living like a *monk*, I was going to say — egad, I wish I was. Give me those d—— bitters; they haven't done me a bit of good — thanks."

"If you was to go to the country, sir," insinuated Miss Sarah Rumble.

"Yes, if I *was*, as you express it, I should die in a week. If air could have killed me, the curious atmosphere of this charming court would have killed me long ago. I'm not one of those air-plants, ma'am. What I want is a little fillip, ma'am, — a little amusement — anything out of this prison; and I'm not going to equate on a moor, or to roost in a wood, to please a pack of fellows that don't care if I were on a treadmill, provided they could take me out whenever they want me. My health, indeed! They simply want me out of the way. My health! Their consideration for me is truly affecting. We'll not mind the bitters, yet. It's time for my claret."

He drank it, and seemed to doze for a little. Mrs. Rumble quickly settled the medicine bottles and other things that had been put out of their places, every now and then looking at the sunken face of the old man, in his deathlike nap — his chin sunk on his breast, the stern carving of his massive forehead, the repulsive lines of a grim selfishness, and a certain evil shadow, made that face in its repose singularly unlovely.

Suddenly he waked.

"I say, Mrs. Rumble, I've been thinking — what about that old clergyman you mentioned — that Mr. Bartlett? I think I will see him — suppose he lectures me; his hard words won't break my bones, and I think he'd amuse me; so you may as well get him in, any time — I don't care when."

Sarah Rumble was only too glad to give her wicked tenant a chance, such as it was, and next day, at about one o'clock, a gentle-looking old clergyman, with thin white hair, knocked at his door, and was admitted. It was the Rev. Thomas Bartlett.

"I can't rise, sir, to receive you — you'll excuse me; but I'm still very ill," said Mr. Dingwell.

"Pray don't stir, sir," said the clergyman.

"I can't," said Mr. Dingwell. "Will you kindly sit in that chair, near the fire? What I have to say is private, and if you please we'll speak very low. My head isn't recovered yet."

"Certainly," said the old gentleman, placing himself as Dingwell wished.

"Thank you very much, sir. Now I can manage it. Isn't your name Thomas, sir — the Reverend Thomas Bartlett?" said Mr. Dingwell, looking at him shrewdly from under his white eyebrows.

"That's my name, sir."

"My name's Dingwell. You don't remember? I'll try to bring it to your mind. About twenty-nine years ago you were one of the curates at St. Wyther's in the Fields?"

"Yes, sir, I was," answered the clergyman, fixing his eyes in turn inquisitively on him.

"I was the witness — do you remember me now? — to the ceremony, when that unfortunate fellow, Verney, married Miss — I have a note of her name — hang it! — Rebecca, was it? — Yes, Rebecca — it was Rebecca Mervyn. You married Verney to Miss Mervyn, and I witnessed it."

"I remember very well, sir, that a gentleman did accompany Mr. Verney; and I remember the marriage extremely well, because there occurred very distressing circumstances respecting that Mr. Verney not very long after, which fixed that marriage in my mind; but having seen you once only, sir, I can't pretend to recollect your face."

"There has been some time, too, sir, since then," said Mr. Dingwell, with a cynical sneer, and a shrug. "But I think I should have recognized you; that's perhaps owing to my having a remarkably retentive memory for faces; however, it's of no great

consequence here. It isn't a matter of identification at all. I only want to know, as Verney's dead, whether you can tell what has become of that poor lady, or can find any clue to her whereabouts — there was a baby — a little child — if they are still living."

"She did write to me twice, sir, within a few years after the marriage. He treated her very ill, sir," said the clergyman.

"Infamously, I fancy," said Dingwell; "and how long ago was that, sir?"

"Oh! a long time; twenty — ay, five — ay, eight and-twenty years since," said the old gentleman.

Dingwell laughed.

His visitor stared.

"Yes, it is a good while," said Mr. Dingwell; "and looking over that gulf, sir, you may fill your glass, and sing —

'Many a lad I liked is dead,  
And many a lass grown old.'

Eight-and-twenty years! 'Gad, sir, she's had time to grow gray; and to be dead and buried; and to serve a handsome period of her time in purgatory. I forgot, though; you don't follow me there. I was thinking of the French curé, who made part of my journey here with me."

"No, sir; Church of England, thank God; the purest faith; the most scriptural, I believe, on earth. You, sir, I assume, are of the same Church," said he.

"Well, I can't say I am, sir; nor a Catholic, nor a Quaker," said the invalid.

"I hope, sir, there's no tendency to rationalism?"

"No, sir, I thank you; to no ism whatever invented by any other man; Dingwellism for Dingwell; Smithism for Smith. Every man has a right to his opinion, in my poor judgment."

"And pray, sir, if neither Romanist nor Protestant, what are you?" inquired the clergyman, as having a right to ask.

"*Porcus de gruge epicuri*, at your service," said the sick man, with a feeble smirk.

"I had hoped, sir, it might have been for some profitable purpose you had sent for me," said the disappointed pastor.

"Well, sir, I was baptized in the Church of England, although I don't subscribe the articles; so I served in your regiment, you see, though I don't wear the uniform any longer."

"I thought, sir, you might have wished some conversation upon religious subjects."

"And haven't we had it, sir? Sorry we



don't agree. I'm too old to turn out of my own way; but, though I can't learn yours, I shall be happy to teach you something of mine, if you wish it."

"I think, sir, as I have other calls to make," said the old clergyman, much offended, and rising to take his leave as he spoke, "I had better wish you a good afternoon."

"Pray, sir, stay a moment; I never knew a clergyman in such a hurry before to leave a sick man; as no man knows, according to your theory, when he's going to be converted — and how should I? The mildew of death is whitening each of us at this moment; the last golden sands are running out. D—— it, give me a chance."

This incongruous harangue was uttered so testily — even fiercely — that the good clergyman was puzzled, and began to doubt in what state his fever might have left Mr. Dingwell's brain.

"Don't you see, sir? Do sit down — a little patience won't do either of us any harm."

"Certainly, sir," hesitated the clergyman, looking hard at him. "But I have not a great deal of time."

"Nor I a great deal of strength; I shan't keep you long, sir."

The Rev. Thomas Bartlett sat down again, and glanced meekly an invitation to Mr. Dingwell to begin.

"Nine-and-twenty years, sir, since you married that unlucky pair. Now, I need not say by what particular accidents — for the recollection is painful — I was in afterlife thrown into the society of that unfortunate ill-used dog, poor Arthur Verney; I knew him intimately. I was the only friend he had left, and I was with him when he died, infamously neglected by all his family. He had just got his half-yearly payment of a beggarly annuity, on which he subsisted; *he* — the rightful Viscount Verney, and the head of his family — ha, ha, ha! By Jove, sir, I can't help laughing, though I pity him. Having that little sum in his hand, said he to me, 'You take charge of this for my son, if you can find him; and I rely on your friendship to look him up if ever you revisit England; this is for him; and he was baptized by the Rev. Thomas Bartlett, as my wife wrote to tell me just eight-and-twenty years ago, and he, no doubt can enable you to trace him.' That's what he said. What say you, sir?"

"Old Lady Verney placed the child in charge of the gentleman who then managed the Verney property. I heard all about it from a Mr. Wynne Williams, a Welch law-

yer. The child died when only a year old; you know *he* would have been the heir-apparent."

"Poor Arthur said *no*, sir. I asked him — a Scotch marriage, or some of those crooked wedlocks on which they found bigamies and illegitimacies. 'No,' Arthur said, 'he has no technical case, and he may be miserably poor; this is all I can do, and I charge you with it.' It was very solemn, sir. Where does that lawyer live?"

"At this moment I can't recollect, sir — some place near which the Verneys have estates."

"Cardylian?"

"The very place, sir."

"I know it, sir; I've been there when I was a boy. And his name was Wynne Williams?"

"I *think* it was," said the clergyman.

"And you have nothing more to say about the poor child?" asked Mr. Dingwell.

"There is nothing more, I fancy, sir," said Mr. Bartlett. "Can I give you any more information?"

"Not any, sir, that I can think of at present. Many thanks, Mr. Bartlett, for your obliging call. Wait a moment for the servant."

And Mr. Dingwell, thinking fiercely, rang his hand-bell long and viciously.

"Ha! Mrs. Rumble; you'll show this gentleman out. Good-bye, sir, and many thanks."

"Good day, sir."

"Ha, ha, ha! It's a good subject, and a fertile!" muttered Mr. Dingwell, so soon as he was alone.

For the rest of that evening Mr. Dingwell seemed to find ample amusement in his own thoughts, and did not trouble Mrs. Rumble with that contemptuous and cynical banter, which she was obliged to accept, when he pleased, for conversation.

The only thing she heard him say was — "I'll go there."

Now Malory had already been proved to be a safe hiding place for a gentleman in Mr. Dingwell's uncomfortable circumstances. The air was unexceptionable, and Lord Verney was easily persuaded to permit the old man to sojourn, for a few weeks, in the steward's house, under the care of old Mrs. Mervyn's servant, aided by one provided by Messrs. Goldshed and Levi.

There were two rooms in the steward's house, which old Mrs. Mervyn never used, and some furniture removed from the Dower house adjoining, rendered them tolerably comfortable. A letter from old Lady Ver-



ney opened and explained the request, which amounted to a command, that she would permit the invalid, in whom Lord Verney took an interest, to occupy, for a fortnight or so, the spare rooms in the steward's house.

So all was made ready, and the day fixed for Mr. Dingwell's arrival.

## CHAPTER LXI.

## A SURPRISE.

MR. DINGWELL, already much more like himself, having made the journey by easy stages, was approaching Malory by night, in a post-chaise. Fatigue, sickness, or some other cause, perhaps, exasperated his temper specially that night.

Well made up in mufflers, his head was frequently out at the window.

"The old church, by Jove!" he muttered, with a dismal grin, as going slowly down the jolly hill. Beneath the ancient trees, the quaint little church of Llanderris, and its quiet churchyard appeared at the left of the narrow road, white in the moonlight.

"A new crop of fools, fanatics, and hypocrites come up, since I remember them, and the old ones gone down to enrich that patch of ground, and send up their dirty juice in nettles, and thistles, and docks. 'In sure and certain hope.' Why should not they, the swine! as well as their masters, cunning, and drunken, and sneaks. I'd like to pay a fellow to cut their epitaphs. Why should I spare them a line of truth? Here I am, plain Mr. Dingwell. They don't care much about me; and when my Lord Verney went down the other day, to show them, what a fool they have got for a master, amid congenial rejoicings, I don't hear that they troubled their heads with many regrets for my poor friend Arthur. Ha! There's the estuary, and Pendillion. These things don't change, my Lord Verney. Pity Lord Verney doesn't wear as well as Pendillion. There is Ware, over the water, if we had light to see it — to think of that shabby little whey-faced fool! Here we are; these are the trees of Malory, egad!"

And with a shrug he repeated Homer's words, which say — "As are the generations of leaves, such are those of men."

Up the avenue of Malory they were driving, and Dingwell looked out with a dismal curiosity upon the lightless front of the old house.

"Cheerful reception!" he muttered.

"Suppose we pick a hole in your title — a hole in your pocket — hey!"

Dingwell's servant was at the door of the steward's house as they drew up, and helped the snarling old invalid down.

When he got to the room the servant said —

"There's coffee, and everything as you desired."

"I'll take breath first, if you please — coffee afterwards."

"Mrs. Mervyn hopes, sir, as how you'll parding her to-night, being so late, and not in good 'ealth herself, which she would have been hup to receive you hotherwise," said the man, delivering his message eloquently.

"Quite time enough to-morrow, and to-morrow — and to-morrow; and I don't care if our meeting creeps away, as that remarkable person, William Shakespeare, says — 'in this pretty pace.' This is more comfortable, egad! than Rosemary-court. I don't care, I say, if it creeps in that pretty pace, till we are both in heaven. What's Hecuba to me, or I to Hecuba? So help me off with these things."

Lord Verney, on whom, in his moods, Mr. Dingwell commented so fully, was dispensing his hospitalities just then, on the other side of the estuary, at his princely mansion of Ware. The party was, it is true, small — very small, in fact. Lady Wimbleton had been there, and the Hon. Caroline Oldys; but they were now visiting Cardyllian at the Verney arms.

Mr. Jos. Larkin, to his infinite content, was at Ware, and deplored the unchristian feelings displayed by Mr. Wynne Williams, whom he had by this time formally supplanted in the management of Lord Verney's country affairs, and who had exhibited "a nasty feeling," he "might say a petulance quite childish," last Sunday, when Mr. Larkin had graced Cardyllian Church with his personal devotions, and refused to vacate, in his favor, the small pew which he held as proprietor of Plasdwyllyn, but which Mr. Larkin chose to think he occupied in virtue of his former position of solicitor to Lord Verney.

Cleve Verney being still in London, received one morning from his uncle the following short and astounding note, as he sat at breakfast: —

"MY DEAR CLEVE, — The time having arrived for taking that step, which the stability of our house of Verney has long appeared to demand, all preliminaries being satisfactorily adjusted, and the young lady and Lady Wim-

bledon, with a very small party of their relations, as you may have observed by the public papers, at present at the Hotel or Cardyllian, nothing remains unaccomplished by way of preparation, but your presence at Ware, which I shall expect on Friday next, when you can meet Miss Caroline Oldys in those new and more defined relations which our contemplated alliance suggests. That event is arranged to take place on the Wednesday following. Mr. Larkin, who reports to me the substance of a conversation with you, and who has my instructions to apprise you fully of any details you may desire to be informed of, will see you on the morning of to-morrow, in the library at Verney House, at a quarter-past eleven o'clock. He leaves Ware by the mail train to-night. You will observe that the marriage, though not strictly private, is to be conducted without *clat*, and has not been anywhere announced. This will explain my not inviting you to bring down any friend of yours to Ware for the occasion."

So it ends with the noble lord's signature, and a due attestation of the state of his affections towards Cleve.

With the end of his uncle's letter, an end of that young gentleman's breakfast — only just begun — came also.

Cleve did not start up and rap out an oath. On the contrary, he sat very still, with something, almost a smile, on his pale, patient face. In a little while he folded the letter up gently, and put it in his pocket. Then he did get up and go to the window looking out upon the piece of ground at the rear of Verney House, and the sooty leaves and sparrows that beautified it. For a long time he enjoyed that view, and then took a swift walk for nearly half an hour in the streets — drowsy, formal streets in that quarter of the town, involving little risk of interruption.

His wife — what a hell was now in that word! — and why? Another man would have found in it a fountain of power and consolation. His wife, his little boy, were now in France. He thought of them both sourly enough. He was glad they were so far off. Margaret would have perceived the misery of his mind. She would have been poking questions at him, and he would neither have divulged nor in anything have consulted her. In the motive of this reserve, which harmonized with his character, may have mingled a suspicion that *his* interests and hers might not, in this crisis, have required quite the same treatment.

It was about eleven o'clock as he entered Verney House again. In a quarter of an hour more that villanous attorney, to whose vulgar machinations he attributed his pres-

ent complicated wretchedness, would be with him.

Without any plan, only hating that abominable Christian, and resolved to betray neither thought nor emotion, which could lead him to suspect, ever so faintly, the truth, he at length heard him announced, as a man who has seen his death warrant hears the approach of the executioner. Mr. Larkin entered, with his well-brushed hat in his hand, his bald head shining as with a glory, a meek smile on his lips, a rat-like shrinking observation in his eyes.

"Oh! Mr. Larkin," said Mr. Cleve Verney, with a smile, "My uncle said you would look in to-day. We have often talked the matter over together, you know, my uncle and I, and I'm not sure that you can tell me very much that I don't know already. Sit down, pray."

"Thanks, I think it was chiefly to let you know what he can do for you. I need not say to you, my dear Mr. Verney, how generous Lord Verney is, and what an uncle, Mr. Verney, he has been to *you*."

Here was a little glance of the pink eyes at the ceiling, and a momentary elevation of his large hand, and a gentle, admiring shake of the bald head.

"No; of course. It is entirely as his attorney, sir, acquainted with details which he has directed you to mention to me, that he speaks of your call here. I had a letter his morning."

"Quite so. It was to mention that although he could not, of course, in prudence, under the circumstances, think of *settling* anything — which amounts, in fact, to an alienation — a step which in justice to himself, and the integrity of the family estates, he could not concede or contemplate; he yet — and he wishes it at the same time to be understood, strictly as his present intention — means to make you an allowance of a thousand pounds a year."

"Rather a small allowance, don't you think, for a man with a seat in the House to marry on?" observed Cleve.

"Pardon me; but he does not contemplate your immediate marriage, Mr. Verney," answered Larkin.

"Rather a sudden change of plan, considering that he fixed Wednesday next, by his letter," said Cleve, with a faint sneer.

"Pardon me, again; but that referred to his own marriage — Lord Verney's contemplated marriage with the Honorable Miss Oldys."

"Oh!" said Cleve, looking steadily down on the table. "Oh! to be sure."

"That alliance will be celebrated on Wednesday, as proposed."

Mr. Larkin paused, and Cleve felt that his odious eyes were reading his countenance. Cleve could not help turning pale, but there was no other visible symptom of his dismay.

"Yes; the letter was a little confused. He has been urging me to marry, and I fancied he had made up his mind to expedite my affair; and it is rather a relief to me to be assured it is his own, for I am in no particular hurry—quite the reverse. Is there anything more?"

"I meant to ask you that question, Mr. Verney. I fancied you might possibly wish to put some questions to me. I have been commissioned, within certain limits, to give you any information you may desire." Mr. Larkin paused again.

Cleve's blood boiled. "Within certain limits! more in my uncle's confidence than I am, that vulgar, hypocritical attorney!" He fancied beside that Mr. Larkin saw what a shock the news was, and that he liked, with a mean sense of superiority, making him feel that he penetrated his affectation of indifference.

"It is very thoughtful of you; but if anything strikes me I shall talk to my uncle. There are subjects that would interest me more than those on which he would be at all likely to talk with you."

"Quite possibly," said Mr. Larkin. "And what shall I report to his lordship as the result of our conversation?"

"Simply the truth, sir."

"I don't, I fear, make myself clear. I meant to ask whether there was anything you wished me to add. You can always reckon upon me, Mr. Verney, to convey your views to Lord Verney, if there should ever happen to be anything you feel a delicacy about opening to his lordship yourself."

"Yes, I shall write to him," answered Cleve, drily.

And Cleve Verney rose, and the attorney, simpering and bowing grandly, took his departure.

#### CHAPTER XLII.

##### CLAY RECTORY BY MOONLIGHT.

As the attorney made his astounding announcement, Cleve had felt as if his brain, in vulgar parlance, *turned*! In a moment the world in which he had walked and lived from his school-days passed away, and a chasm yawned at his feet. His whole fu-

ture was subverted. A man who dies in delusion, and awakes not to celestial music and the light of paradise, but to the trumpet of judgment and the sight of the abyss, will quail as Cleve did.

How he so well maintained the appearance of self-possession while Mr. Larkin remained, I can't quite tell. Pride, however, which has carried so many quivering souls, with an appearance of defiance, through the press-room to the drop, supported him.

But now that scoundrel was gone. The fury that fired him, the iron constraint that held him firm was also gone, and Cleve despaired.

Till this moment, when he was called on to part with it all, he did not suspect how entirely his ambition was the breath of his nostrils, or how mere a sham was the sort of talk to which he had often treated Margaret and others about an emigrant's life and the Arcadian liberty of the Antipodes.

The House-of-Commons life—the finest excitement on earth—the growing fame, the peerage, the premier-ship in the distance—the vulgar fingers of Jos Larkin had just dropped the extinguisher upon the magic lamp that had showed him these dazzling illusions, and he was left to grope and stumble in the dark among his debts, with an obscure wife on his arm, and a child to plague him also. And this was to be the end! A precarious thousand a year—dependent on the caprice of a narrow, tyrannical old man, with a young wife at his ear, and a load of debts upon Cleve's shoulders, as he walked over the quag!

It is not well to let any object, apart from heaven, get into your head and fill it. Cleve had not that vein of insanity which on occasion draws men to suicide. In the thread of his destiny that fine black strand was not spun. So blind and deep for a while was his plunge into despair, that I think had that atrabilious poison, which throws out its virus as suddenly as latent plague, and lays a *felo-de-se* to cool his heels and his head in God's prison, the grave—had a drop or two, I say, of that elixir of death been mingled in his blood, I don't think he would ever have seen another morrow.

But Cleve was not thinking of dying. He was sure—in rage, and blasphemy, and torture, it might be—but still he *was* sure to live on. Well, what was now to be done? Every power must be tasked to prevent the ridiculous catastrophe which threatened him with ruin; neither scruple, nor remorse, nor conscience, nor compunction should stand in the way. We are not

to suppose that he is about to visit the Hon. Miss Caroline Oldys with a dagger in one hand and a cup of poison in the other, nor with gunpowder to blow up his uncle and Ware, as some one did Darnley and the house of Kirk of Field. Simply his mind was filled with the one idea, that one way or another the thing *must* be stopped.

It was long before his ideas arranged themselves, and for a long time after no plan of operations which had a promise of success suggested itself. When at length he did decide, you would have said no wilder or wicked scheme could have entered his brain.

It was a moonlight night. The scene a flat country, with a monotonous row of poplars crossing it. This long file of formal trees marks the line of a canal, fronting which at a distance of about a hundred yards stands a lonely brick house, with a few sombre elms rising near it. A light mist hung upon this expansive flat. The soil must have been unproductive, so few farmsteads were visible for miles around. Here and there pools of water glimmered coldly in the moonlight; and patches of rushes and reeds made the fields look ragged and neglected.

Here and there, too, a stunted hedge-row showed dimly along the level, otherwise unbroken, and stretching away into the haze of the horizon. It is a raw and dismal landscape, where a murder might be done, and the scream lose itself in distance unheard — where the highwayman, secure from interruption, might stop and plunder the chance wayfarer at his leisure — a landscape which a fanciful painter would flank with a distant row of gibbets.

The front of this square brick house, with a little enclosure, hardly two yards in depth, and a wooden paling in front, and with a green moss growing damply on the piers and the doorsteps, and tinging the mortar between the bricks, looks out upon a narrow old road, along which just then were audible the clink and rattle of an approaching carriage and horses.

It was past one o'clock. No hospitable light shone from the windows, which on the contrary looked out black and dreary upon the vehicle and steaming horses which pulled up in front of the house.

Out got Cleve and reconnoitred.

"Are you quite sure?"

"Clay Parsonage — yes, sir," said the driver.

Cleve shook the little wooden gate, which was locked; so he climbed the paling, and

knocked and rang loud and long at the hall door.

The driver at last reported a light in an upper window.

Cleve went on knocking and ringing, and the head of the Rev. Isaac Dixie appeared high in the air, over the window-stool.

"What do you want, pray?" challenged that suave clergyman from his sanctuary.

"It's I — Cleve Verney. Why do you go to bed at such hours? I must see you for a moment."

"Dear me! my dear, valued pupil! — Who could have dreamed? I shall be down in one moment."

"Thanks — I'll wait;" and then to the driver he said — "I shan't stay five minutes; mind, you're ready to start with me the moment I return."

Now the hall-door opened. The Rev. Isaac Dixie — for his dress was a compromise between modesty and extreme haste, and necessarily very imperfect — stood in greater part behind the hall-door; a bedroom candlestick in his fingers, smiling blandly on his "distinguished pupil," who entered without a smile, without a greeting — merely saying —

"Where shall we sit down for a minute, old Dixie?"

Holding his hand with the handle in it across, so as to keep his flowing dressing-gown together; and with much wonder and some misgivings, yet contriving his usual rosy smile, he conducted his unexpected visitor into his "study."

"I've so many apologies to offer, my very honoured and dear friend; this is so miserable, and I fear you are cold. We must get something; we must really manage something — some little refreshment."

Dixie placed the candle on the chimney-piece, and looked inquiringly on Cleve.

"There's some sherry, I know, and I think there's some brandy."

"There's no one up and about?" inquired Cleve.

"Not a creature," said the Rector; "no one can hear a word, and these are good thick walls."

"I've only a minute; I know you'd like to be a bishop, Dixie?"

Cleve, with his muffler and his hat still on, was addressing the future prelate, with his elbow on the chimney-piece.

"*Nolo episcopari*, of course, but we know you would, and there's no time now for pretty speeches. Now, listen, you shall be *that*, and you shall reach it by two steps — the two best livings in our gift. I always

keep my word; and when I set my heart on a thing I bring it about, and so sure as I do any good I'll bend all my interest to that one object."

The Rev. Isaac Dixie stared hard at him, for Cleve looked strangely, and spoke as sternly as a villain demanding his purse. The Rector of Clay looked horribly perplexed. His countenance seemed to ask, "Does he mean to give me a mitre or to take my life, or is he quite right in his head?"

"You think I don't mean what I say, or that I'm talking nonsense, or that I'm mad. I'm not mad, it's no nonsense, and no man was ever more resolved to do what he says." And Cleve who was not given to swearing, did swear a fierce oath. "But all this is not for nothing; there's a condition; you must do me a service. It won't cost you much — less trouble, almost, than you've taken for me to-night, but you *must* do it."

"And may I, my dear and valued pupil, may I ask?" — began the reverend gentleman.

"No, you need not ask, for I'll tell you. It's the same sort of service you did for me in France," said Cleve.

"Ah! ha!" ejaculated the clergyman, very uneasily. "For no one but *you*, my dear and admirable pupil, could I have brought myself to take that step, and I trust that you will on reconsideration."

"You *must* do what I say," said Cleve, looking and speaking with the same unconscious sternness, which frightened the Rector more than any amount of bluster. "I hardly suppose you want to break with me finally, and you don't quite know all the consequences of that step, I fancy."

"Break with *you*? my admirable patron! desert my dear and brilliant pupil in an emergency? *Certainly* not. Reckon upon me, my dear Mr. Verney, whenever you need my poor services, to the *utmost*. To *you* all my loyalty is due, but unless you make a very special point of it, I should hesitate for any other person living, but yourself, to incur a second time."

"Don't you think my dear, d — d old friend, I understand the length, and breadth, and depth, of your friendship; I know how strong it is, and I'll make it *stronger*. It is for *me* — yes, in my own case you must repeat the service, as you call it, which you once did me, in another country."

The Rev. Isaac Dixie's rosy cheeks mottled all over blue and yellow; he withdrew his hand from his dressing-gown, with an

unaffected gesture of fear; and he fixed a terrified gaze upon Cleve Verney's eyes, which did not flinch, but encountered his, darkly and fixedly with a desperate resolution.

"Why you look as much frightened as if I asked you to commit a crime; you marvellous old fool, you hardly think me mad enough for *that*!"

"I hardly know, Mr. Verney, what I think," said Dixie, looking with a horrible helplessness into his face. "Good God! sir; it can't be anything *wrong*!"

"Come, come, sir; you're more than half asleep. Do you *dare* to think I'd commit myself to any man, by such an idiotic proposal? No one but a lunatic could think of *blasting* himself as you — but you *can't* suppose it. Do listen, and understand if you can; my wife, to whom you married me, is *dead*, six months ago she *died*; I tell you she's *dead*."

"Dear me! I'm very much pained, and I will say *shocked*; the deceased lady, I should *not*, my dear pupil, have alluded to, of course; but need I say, I never heard of that affliction?"

"How on earth could you? You don't suppose, knowing all you do, I'd put it in the papers, among the *deaths*?"

"No; dear me, of course," said the Rev. Isaac Dixie, hastily bringing his dressing-gown again together. "No, certainly."

"I don't think that sort of publication would answer you or me. You forget it is two years ago and more — a *good deal* more. I don't though, and whatever *you* may, I don't want my uncle to know anything about it."

"But, you know, I only meant, you hadn't told me; my dear Mr. Verney, my honoured pupil, you will see — don't you perceive how much is involved? but *this* — couldn't you put this upon some one else? Do — *do* think."

"No, in *no* one's power, but *yours*, Dixie;" and Cleve took his hand, looking in his face, and wrung it so hard that the reverend gentleman almost winced under the pressure, of administering which I dare say Cleve was quite unconscious. "No one but *you*."

"The poor — the respected lady — being deceased, of course you'll give me a note to that effect under your hand; you'll have no objection, in this case, to my taking out a special license?"

"Special devil! are you mad? Why any one could do it with that. No, it's just



"because it is a little *irregular*, nothing more, and exacts implicit mutual confidence that I have chosen you for it."

Dixie looked as if the compliment was not an unmixed pleasure.

"I still think, that—that having performed the other, there is some awkwardness, and the penalties are awful," said he with increasing uneasiness; "and it does strike me, that if my dear Mr. Verney could place his hand upon some other humble friend, in this particular case, the advantages would be obvious."

"Come, Dixie," said Cleve, "I'm going; you must say yes or no, and so decide whether you have seen the last of me. I can't spend the night giving you my reasons, but they are conclusive. If you act like a man of sense, it's the last service I shall ever require at your hands, and I'll reward you *splendidly*; if you don't, I not only cease to be your friend, but I become your *enemy*. I can strike when I like it—you know that; and upon my soul I'll smash you. I shall see my uncle to-morrow morning at Ware, and I'll tell him distinctly the entire of that French transaction."

"But—but pray, my dear Mr. Verney, do say, *did* I refuse—do I *object*? you may command me, of course. I have incurred, I may say, a risk for you already, a risk in *form*."

"Exactly, *in form*; and you don't increase it by this kindness, and you secure my eternal gratitude. Now you speak like a man of sense. You must be in Cardyllian to-morrow evening. It is possible I may ask *nothing* of you; if I do, the utmost is a technical irregularity, and secrecy, which we are both equally interested in observing. You shall stay a week in Cardyllian, mind, and I, of course, frank you there and back, and while you remain—it's my business. It has a political aspect, as I shall explain to you by-and-by, and so soon as I shall have brought my uncle round, and can avow it, it will lead the way rapidly to *your* fortune. Shall I see you in Cardyllian to-morrow evening?"

"Agreed, sir!—agreed, my dear Mr. Verney. I shall be there, my dear and valued pupil—*yes*."

"Go to the Verney Arms; I shall probably be looking out for you there; at all events I shall see you before night."

Verney looked at his watch, and repeated "I shall see you to-morrow;" and without taking leave, or hearing, as it seemed, the Rev. Isaac Dixie's farewell compliments and benedictions, he walked out in gloomy haste, as if the conference was not closed, but

only suspended, by the approaching parenthesis of a night and a day.

From the hall-table the obsequious divine took the key of the little gate, to which, in slippers and dressing gown, he stepped blandly forth, and having let out his despot pupil, and waved his adieu, as the chaise drove away, he returned, and locked up his premises and house, with a great load at his heart.

## CHAPTER LXIII.

### AN ALARM.

CLEVE reached the station, eight miles away from the dismal swamp I have described, in time to catch the mail train. From Llwynan he did not go direct to Ware, but drove instead to Cardyllian, and put up at the Verney Arms early next morning.

By ten o'clock he was seen sauntering about the streets, talking with old friends, and popping into the shops and listening to the gossip of the town. Cleve had a sort of friendliness that answered all electioneering purposes perfectly, and that was the measure of its value.

Who should he light upon in Castle-street but Tom Sedley! They must have arrived by the same train at Llwynan. The sight of Tom jarred intensely upon Cleve Verney's nerves. There was something so strange in his looks and manner that Sedley thought him ill. He stopped for a while to talk with him at the corner of Church-street, but seemed so obviously disposed to escape from him, that Sedley did not press his society, but acquiesced with some disgust and wonder in their new relations.

Tom Sedley had been with Wynne Williams about poor Vane Etherage's affairs. Honest Wynne Williams was in no mood to flatter Lord Verney, the management of whose affairs he had, he said, "*resigned*." The fact was that he had been, little by little, so uncomfortably superseded in his functions by our good friend Jos Larkin, and the fashion of Lord Verney's countenance was so manifestly changed, that honest Wynne Williams felt that he might as well do a proud thing, and resign, as wait a little longer for the inevitable humiliation of dismissal.

"I'm afraid my friend the admiral is in bad hands; worse hands than Larkin's he could hardly have fallen into. I could tell you things of that fellow, if we had time—of course strictly between ourselves,

you know—that would open your eyes. And as to his lordship—well, I suppose most people know something of Lord Verney. I owe him nothing, you know; it's all ended between us, and I wash my hands of him and his concerns. You may talk to him, if you like; but you'll find you might as well argue with the tide in the estuary there. I'd be devilish glad if I could be of any use; but you see how it is; and to tell you the truth I'm afraid it must come to a regular smash, unless Lord Verney drops that nasty litigation. There are some charges, you know, upon the property already; and with that litigation hanging over it, I don't see how he's to get money to pay those calls. It's a bad business, I'm afraid, and an awful pity. Poor old fellow!—a little bit rough, but devilish good-hearted."

Tom Sedley went up to Hazelden. The Etherage girls knew he was coming, and were watching for him at the top of the steep walk.

"I've been talking, as I said I would, to Wynne Williams this morning," he said, after greetings and inquiries made and answered, "and he had not anything important to advise; but he has promised to think over the whole matter."

"And Wynne Williams is known to be the cleverest lawyer in the world," exclaimed Miss Charity, exulting. "I was afraid, on account of his having been so lately Lord Verney's adviser, that he would not have been willing to consult with you. And will he use his influence, which must be very great, with Lord Verney?"

"He has none; and he thinks it would be quite useless my talking to him."

"Oh! Is it possible? Well, if he said that, I never heard such nonsense in the course of my life. I think old Lord Verney was one of the *very nicest* men I ever spoke to in the course of my life; and I'm certain it is all that horrid Mr. Larkin and a great mistake; for Lord Verney is quite a gentleman, and would not do anything *sodepicable* as to worry and injure papa by this horrid business, if only you would make him understand it; and I do think Thomas Sedley, you *might* take that trouble for papa."

"I'll go over to Ware, and try to see Lord Verney, if you think my doing so can be of the least use," said Tom, who knew the vanity of arguing with Miss Charity.

"Oh, do," said pretty Agnes, and that entreaty was, of course, a command; so without going up to see old Etherage, who was very much broken and ill, his daughters

said; and hoping possibly to have some cheering news on his return, Tom Sedley took his leave for the present, and from the pier of Cardyllian crossed in a boat to Ware.

On the spacious steps of that palatial mansion, as Mr. Larkin used to term it, stood Lord Verney, looking grandly seaward, with compressed eyes, like a near-sighted gentleman as he was.

"Oh! is she all right?" said Lord Verney.

"I—I don't know, Lord Verney," replied Tom Sedley. "I came to"—

"Oh—aw—Mr.—Mr.—how d'ye do, sir?" said Lord Verney, with marked frigidity, not this time giving him the accustomed finger.

"I came, Lord Verney, hoping you might possibly give me five minutes, and very few words, about that unfortunate business of poor Mr. Vane Etherage."

"I'm unfortunately just going out in a boat—about it; and I can't just now afford time, Mr.—a—Mr."

"Sedley is my name," suggested Sedley, who knew that Lord Verney remembered him perfectly.

"Sedley—Mr. Sedley; yes. As I mentioned, I'm going in a boat. I'm sorry I can't possibly oblige you; and it is very natural you, who are so intimate, I believe, with Mr. Etherage, should take that side of the question—about it; but I've no reason to call those proceedings unfortunate; and—and I don't anticipate—and, in fact, people usually look after their own concerns—about it."

"I'm sure, Lord Verney, if you knew how utterly ruinous, how really *deplorable*, the consequences of pursuing this thing—I mean the lawsuit against him—may be—I am sure—you would stop it all."

Honest Tom spoke in the belief that in the hesitation that had marked the close of the noble lord's remarks there was a faltering of purpose, whereas there was simply a failure of ideas.

"I can't help your forming opinions, sir, though I have not invited their expression upon my concerns and—and affairs. If you have anything to communicate about those proceedings, you had better see Mr. Larkin, my attorney; he's the proper person. Mr. Etherage has taken a line in the county to wound and injure me, as, of course, he has a perfect right to do; he has taken that line, and I don't see any reason why I should not have what I'm entitled to. There's the principle of government by party, you're aware; and we're

not to ask favours of those we seek to wound and injure — about it; and that's my view, and idea, and fixed opinion. I must wish you good morning, Mr. Sedley. I'm going down to my boat, and I decline distinctly any conversation upon the subject of my law business; I decline it *distinctly*, Mr. Sedley — about it," repeated the peer peremptorily; and as he looked a good deal incensed, Tom Sedley wisely concluded it was time to retire; and so his embassage came to an end.

Lord Verney crossed the estuary in his yacht, consulting his watch from time to time, and reconnoitring the green and pier of Cardyllian through his telescope with considerable interest. A little group was assembled near the stair, among whose figures he saw Lady Wimbledon. "Why is not Caroline there?" he kept asking himself, and all the time searching that little platform for the absent idol of his heart.

Let us deal mercifully with this antiquated romance; and if Miss Caroline Oldys forebore to say, "Go up, thou bald-head," let us also spare the amorous incongruity. Does any young man love with the self-abandonment of an old one? Is any romance so romantic as the romance of an old man? When Sancho looked over his shoulder, and saw his master in his shirt, cutting capers and tumbling head-over-heels, and tearing his hair in his love-madness, that wise governor and man of proverbs forgot the grotesqueness of the exhibition in his awe of that vehement adoration. So let us. When does this noble frenzy exhibit itself in such maudlin transports, and with a self-sacrifice so idolatrously suicidal, as in the old? Seeing, then, that the spirit is so prodigiously willing, let us bear with the spectacle of their infirmities, and when one of these sighing, magnanimous wrinkled, Philanders goes by, let us not hiss, but rather say kindly. "*Vive la bagatelle!*" or, as we say in Ireland, "More power!"

He was disappointed. Miss Caroline Oldys had a very bad headache, Lady Wimbledon said, and was in her room, in care of her maid, so miserable at losing the charming sail to Malory.

Well, the lover was sorely disappointed, as we have said; but there was nothing for it but submission, and to comfort himself with the assurances of Lady Wimbledon that Caroline's headaches never lasted long, and that she was always better for a long time when they were over. This latter

piece of information seemed to puzzle Lord Verney.

"Miss Oldys is always better after an attack than before it," said Cleve, interpreting for his uncle.

"Why, of course. That's what Lady Wimbledon means, as I understand it," said Lord Verney, a little impatiently. It's very sad; you must tell me all about it; but we may hope to find her, you say, quite recovered when we return?"

Cleve was not of the party to Malory. He returned to the Verney Arms. He went up to Lady Wimbledon's drawing-room with a book he had promised to lend her, and found Miss Caroline Oldys.

Yes, she was better. He was very earnest and tender in his solicitudes. He was looking ill, and was very melancholy.

Two hours after her maid came in to know whether she "pleased to want anything?" and she would have sworn that Miss Caroline had been crying. Mr. Cleve had got up from beside her, and was looking out of the window.

A little later in the day, old Lady Calthorpe, a cousin of Lady Wimbledon's, very feeble and fussy, and babbling in a querulous treble, was pushed out in her Bath-chair, Cleve and Miss Caroline Oldys accompanying, to the old castle of Cardyllian.

On the step of the door of the Verney Arms, as they emerged, whom should they meet, descending from the fly that had borne him from Llwynan, but the Rev. Isaac Dixie. That sleek and rosy gentleman, with flat feet, and large hands, and fascinating smile, was well pleased to join the party, and march blandly beside the chair of the Viscountess, invigorating the fainting spirit of that great lady by the balm of his sympathy and the sunshine of his smile.

So into the castle they went, across the nearly obliterated moat, where once a drawbridge hung, now mantled with greenish grass, under the grim arches, where once the clanging portcullis rose and fell, and into the base court, and so under other arches into the inner court, surrounded by old ivy-mantled walls.

In this seclusion the old Lady Calthorpe stopped her chair to enjoy the sweet air and sunshine, and the agreeable conversation of the divine, and Cleve offered to guide Miss Caroline Oldys through the ruins, an exploration in which she seemed highly interested.

Cleve spoke low and eloquently, but I

don't think it was about the architecture. Time passed rapidly, and at last Miss Oldys whispered —

"We've been too long away from Lady Calthorpe. I must go back. She'll think I have deserted her."

So they emerged from the roofless chambers and dim corridors, and Cleve wished from the bottom of his heart that some good or evil angel would put off his uncle's nuptials for another week, and all would be well — *well!*

Yes — what was "well," if one goes to moral ideals for a standard? We must run risks — we must set one side of the book against the other. What is the purpose and the justification of all morality but happiness? The course which involves least misery is alternatively the moral cause. And take the best act that ever you did, and place it in that dreadful solvent, the light of God's eye, and how much of its motive will stand the test? Yes — another week, and all will be well; and has not a fertile mind like his resource for any future complication, as for this, that may arise?

Captain Shrapnell was not sorry to meet this distinguished party as they emerged, and drew up on the grass at the side, and raised his hat with a reverential smile, as the old lady wheeled by, and throwing a deferential concern suddenly into his countenance, he walked a few paces beside Cleve, while he said —

"You've heard, of course, about your uncle, Lord Verney?"

"No?" answered Cleve, on chance.

"No? — Oh! — Why it's half an hour ago. I hope it's nothing serious; but his groom drove down from Malory for the doctor here. Something wrong with his head — suddenly, I understand, and old Lyster took his box with him, and a bottle of leeches — that looks serious, eh? — along with him."

Shrapnell spoke low, and shook his head.

"I — I did not hear a word of it. I've been in the castle with old Lady Calthorpe. I — I'm very much surprised."

There was something odd, shrewd old Shrapnell fancied in the expression of Cleve's eye, which for a moment met his. But Cleve looked pale and excited, as he said a word in a very low tone to Miss Oldys, and walked across the street, accompanied by Shrapnell, to the doctor's shop.

"Oh!" said Cleve, hastily stepping in, and accosting a lean, pale youth, with lank, black hair, who paused in the process of braying a prescription in a mortar as he

approached. "My uncle's not well, I hear — Lord Verney — at Malory?"

The young man glanced at Captain Shrapnell.

"The doctor told me not to mention, sir; but if *you'd* come into the back-room" —

"I'll be with you in a moment," said Cleve Verney to Shrapnell, at the same time stepping into the sanctum, and the glass door being shut, he asked, "What is it?"

"The doctor thought it must be apoplexy, sir," murmured the young man, gazing with wide open eyes, very solemnly, in Cleve's face.

"So I fancied," and Cleve paused, a little stunned; "and the doctor's there, at Malory, *now?*"

"Yes, sir; he'll be there a quarter of an hour or more by this time," answered the young man.

Again Cleve paused.

"It was not fatal — he was still living?" he asked very low.

"Yes, sir — sure."

Cleve, forgetting any form of valediction, passed into the shop.

"I must drive down to Malory," he said; and calling one of those pony carriages which ply in Cardyllian, he drove away, with a wave of his hand to the Captain, who was sorely puzzled to read the true meaning of that handsome mysterious face.

#### CHAPTER LXIV.

#### A NEW LIGHT.

It was all over Cardyllian by this time that the Viscount was very ill — dying perhaps — possibly dead. Under the transparent green shadow of the tall old trees, down the narrow road to Malory, which he had so often passed in other moods, more passionate, hardly perhaps less selfish, than his present, was Cleve now driving, with brain and heart troubled and busy — "walking, as before, in a vain shadow, and disquieting himself in vain." The daisies looked up innocently as the eyes of children, into his darkened gaze. Had fate after all taken pity on him, and was here by one clip of the inexorable shears a deliverance from the hell of his complication?

As Cleve entered the gate of Malory he saw the party from Cardyllian leaving in the yacht on their return. Lady Wimbledon, it turned out, had remained behind in charge of Lord Verney. On reaching the

house, Cleve learned that Lord Verney was *alive* — was better in fact.

Combining Lady Wimbledon's and the doctor's narratives, what Cleve learned amounted to this: Lord Verney, who affected a mysterious urgency and haste in his correspondence, had given orders that his letters should follow him to Malory that day. One of these letters, with a black seal and black-bordered envelope, proved to be a communication of considerable interest. It was addressed to him by the clergyman who had charge of poor old Lady Verney's conscience, and announced that his care was ended, and the Dowager Lady, Lord Verney's mother, was dead.

As the doctor who had attended her was gone, and no one but servants in the house, he had felt it a duty to write to Lord Verney to apprise him of the melancholy event.

The melancholy event was no great shock to Lord Verney, her mature son of sixty-four, who had sometimes wondered dimly whether she would live as long as the old Countess of Desmond, and go on drawing her jointure for fifty years after his own demise. He had been a good son; he had nothing to reproach himself with. She was about ninety years of age; the estate was relieved of £1,500 per annum. She had been a religious woman too, and was, no doubt, happy. On the whole the affliction was quite supportable.

But no affliction ever came at a more awkward time. Here was his marriage on the eve of accomplishment — a secret so well kept up to yesterday that no one on earth, he fancied, but half a dozen people, knew that any such thing was dreamed of. Lord Verney, like other tragedians in this theatre of ours, was, perhaps, a little more nervous than he seemed, and did not like laughter in the wrong place. He did not want to be talked over, or, as he said, "any jokes or things about it." And therefore he wished the event to take mankind unawares, as the Flood did. But this morning, with a nice calculation as to time, he had posted four letters, bound, like Antonio's argosies, to different remote parts of the world — one to Pau, another to Lisbon, a third to Florence, and a fourth for Geneva, to friends who were likely to spread the news in all directions — which he cared nothing about, if only the event came off at the appointed time. With the genius of a diplomatist, he had planned his remaining despatches, not very many, so as to reach their less distant destinations at the latest hour, previous to that of his union. But the others were actually on their way, and

he supposed a month or more must now pass before it could take place with any decorum, and, in the meantime, all the world would be enjoying their laugh over his interesting situation.

Lord Verney was very much moved when he read this sad letter; he was pathetic and peevish, much moved, and irritated, and shed some tears. He withdrew to write a note to the clergyman who had announced the catastrophe, and was followed by Lady Wimbledon, who held herself privileged, and to her he poured forth his "ideas and feelings" about his "poor dear mother who was gone, about it;" and suddenly he was seized with a giddiness so violent that if a chair had not been behind him he must have fallen on the ground.

It was something like a fit; Lady Wimbledon was terrified; he looked so ghastly, and answered nothing, only sighed laboriously, and moved his white lips. In her distraction she threw up the window, and screamed for the servants; and away went Lord Verney's open carriage, as we have seen, to Cardyllian, for the doctor.

By the time that Cleve arrived, the attack had declared itself gout — fixed, by a mustard bath "nicely" in the foot, leaving, however, its "leven mark" upon the head where it had flickered in an angrily inflamed eye.

Here was another vexation. It might be over in a week, the doctor said; it might last a month. But for the present it was quite out of the question moving him. They must contrive, and make him as comfortable as they could. But at Malory he must be contented to remain for the present.

He saw Cleve for a few minutes.

"It's very unfortunate — your poor dear grandmother — and this gout; but we must bow to the will of Providence; we have every consolation in her case. She's, no doubt, gone to heaven, about it; but it's indescribably untoward, the whole thing; you apprehend me — the marriage — you know — and things; we must pray to heaven to grant us patience under these cross-grained, unintelligible misfortunes that are always persecuting some people, and never come in the way of others, and I beg you'll represent to poor Caroline how it is. I'm not even to write for a day or two; and you must talk to her, Cleve, and try to keep her up, for I do believe she does like her old man, and does not wish to see the poor old fellow worse than he is; and, Cleve, I appreciate your attention and affection in coming so promptly;" and Lord Verney put out his thin hand and pressed Cleve's.



"You're very kind, Cleve, and if they allow me I'll see you to-morrow, and you'll tell me what's in the papers, for they won't let me read; and there will be this funeral, you know — about it — your poor dear grandmother; she'll of course — she'll be buried; you'll have to see to that, you know; and Larkin, you know — he'll save you trouble, and — and — hey! ha, ha — ho! Very pleasant! Good gracious what torture! Ha! — Oh, dear! Well, I think I've made everything pretty clear, and you'll tell Caroline — it's only flying gout — about it — and — and things. So I must bid you good-by, dear Cleve, and God bless you."

So Cleve did see Caroline Oldys at the Verney Arms, and talked a great deal with her, in a low tone, while old Lady Wimbledon dozed in her chair, and, no doubt, it was all about his uncle's "flying gout."

That night our friend Wynne Williams was sitting in his snugery, a little bit of fire was in the grate, the air being sharp, his tea-things on the table, and the cozy fellow actually reading a novel, with his slippers on the fender.

It was half-past nine o'clock, a rather rakish hour in Cardyllian, when the absorbed attorney was aroused by a tap at his door.

I think I have already mentioned that in that town of the golden age, hall-doors stand open, in evidence of "ancient faith that knows no guile," long after dark.

"Come in," said Wynne Williams; and to his amazement who should enter, not with the conventional smile of greeting, but pale, dark, and wo-begone, but the tall figure of Mrs. Rebecca Mervyn.

Honest Wynne Williams never troubled himself about ghosts, but he had read of spectral illusions, and old Mrs. Mervyn unconsciously encouraged a fancy that the thing he greatly feared had come upon him, and that he was about to become a victim to that sort of hallucination. She stood just a step within the door, looking at him, and he, with his novel on his knee, stared at her as fixedly.

"She's dead," said the old lady.

"Who?" exclaimed the attorney.

"The Dowager Lady Verney," she continued, rather than answered.

"I was so much astonished, ma'am, to see you here; you haven't been down in the town these twelve years I think. I could scarce believe my eyes. Won't you come in, ma'am? Pray do." The attorney by this time was on his legs, and doing the honours, much relieved, and he placed

a chair for her. "If it's any business, ma'am, I'll be most happy, or any time you like."

"Yes, she's dead," said she again.

"Oh, come in, ma'am — do — so is Queen Anne," said the attorney, laughing kindly. "I heard *that* early to-day; we *all* heard it, and we're sorry, of course. Sit down, ma'am. But then she was not very far from a hundred, and we're all mortal. Can I do anything for you, ma'am?"

"She was good to me — a proud woman — hard, they used to say; but she was good to me — yes, sir — and so she's gone, at last. She was frightened at them; there was something in them — my poor head — you know — I couldn't see it, and I did not care, for the little child was gone; it was only two months old, and she was ninety years; it's a long time, and now she's in her shroud, poor thing, and I may speak to you."

"Do, ma'am — pray; but it's growing late, and hadn't we better come to the point a bit?"

She was sitting in the chair he had placed for her, and she had something under her cloak; a thick book it might be, which she held close in her arms. She placed it on the table, and it turned out to be a small tin box with a padlock.

"Papers, ma'am?" he inquired.

"Will you read them, sir, and see what ought to be done? There's the key."

"Certainly, ma'am; and having unlocked it, he disclosed two little sheaves of papers, neatly folded and endorsed.

The attorney turned these over rapidly, merely reading at first the little note of its contents written upon each. "By Jove!" he exclaimed; he looked very serious now, with a frown, and the corners of his mouth drawn down, like a man who witnesses something horrible.

"And, ma'am, how long have you had these?"

"Since Mr. Sedley died."

"I know; that's more than twenty years, I think; did you show them to anyone?"

"Only to the poor old lady who's gone."

"Ay, I see."

There was a paper endorsed "Statement of facts," and this the attorney was now reading.

"Now, ma'am, do you wish to place these papers in my hands, that I may act upon them as the interests of those who are near to you may require?"

She looked at him with a perplexed gaze and said, "Yes, sir, certainly."

"Very well, ma'am; then I must go up

to town at once. It's a very serious affair, ma'am, and I'll do my duty by you."

"Can you understand them, sir?"

"N—no—that is, I must see counsel in London; I'll be back again in a day or two. Leave it all to me, ma'am, and the moment I know anything for certain, you shall know all about it."

The old woman asked the question as one speaks in their sleep, without hearing the answer. Her finger was to her lip, and she was looking down with a knitted brow.

"Ay, she was proud—I *promised*—proud—she was—very high—it will be in Penruthyn—she told me she would be buried there—Dowager Lady Verney—I wish, sir, it had been I."

She drew her cloak about her and left the room, and he accompanied her with the candle to the hall-door, and saw her hurry up the street.

Now and then a passenger looked at the tall cloaked figure gliding swiftly by, but no one recognized her.

The attorney was gaping after her in deep abstraction, and when she was out of sight he repeated, with a resolute wag of his head—

"I will do my duty by you—and a serious affair, upon my soul! A very serious affair it is."

And so he closed the door, and returned to his sitting-room in deep thought, and very strange excitement, and continued reading those papers till one o'clock in the morning.

#### CHAPTER LXV.

MR. DINGWELL AND MRS. MERVYN CONVERSE.

CLEVE was assiduous in consoling Miss Caroline Oldys, a duty specially imposed upon him by the voluntary absence of Lady Wimbledon, who spent four or five hours every day at Malory, with an equally charitable consideration for the spirits of Lord Verney, who sat complaining in pain and darkness.

Every day he saw more or less of the Rev. Isaac Dixie, but never alluded to his midnight interview with him at Clay Rectory. Only once, a little abruptly, he had said to him, as they walked together on the green,

"I say, you must manage your duty for two Sundays more—you *must* stay here for the funeral—that will be on Tuesday week."

Cleve said no more; but he looked at him with a fixed meaning in his eye, with which the clergyman somehow could not parley.

At the post-office, to which Miss Oldys had begged his escort, a letter awaited him. His address was traced in the delicate and peculiar hand of that beautiful being who in those very scenes had once filled every hour of his life with dreams, and doubts, and hopes; and now how did he feel as those slender characters met his eye? Shall I say, as the murderer feels when some relic of his buried crime is accidentally turned up before his eyes—chilled with a pain that reaches on to doomsday—with a tremor of madness—with an insufferable disgust?

Smiling, he put it with his other letters in his pocket, and felt as if every eye looked on him with suspicion—with dislike, and as if little voices in the air were whispering, "It is from his wife—from his wife—from his wife."

Tom Sedley was almost by his side, and had just got his letters—filling him, too, with dismay—posted not ten minutes before from Malory, and smiting his last hope to the centre.

"Look at it, Cleve," he said, half an hour later. "I thought all these things might have softened him—his own illness and his mother's death; and the Etherages—by Jove, I think he'll ruin them; the poor old man is going to leave Hazelden in two or three weeks, and—and he's *utterly* ruined I think, and all by that d—d lawsuit, that Larkin knows perfectly well Lord Verney can never succeed in; but in the meantime it will be the ruin of that nice family, that were so happy there; and look—here it is—my own letter returned—so insulting—like a beggar's petition; and this note—not even signed by him."

Lord Verney is indisposed; he has already expressed his fixed opinion upon the subject referred to in Mr. Sedley's statement, which he returns; he declines discussing it, and refers Mr. Sedley again to his solicitor."

So, disconsolate Sedley, having opened his griefs to Cleve, went on to Hazelden, where he was only too sure to meet with a thoroughly sympathetic audience.

A week passed, and more. And now came the day of old Lady Verney's funeral. It was a long procession—tenants on horseback, tenants on foot—the carriages of all the gentlemen round about.

On its way to Penruthyn Priory the procession passed by the road, ascending the

steep by the little church of Llanderris, and full in view, through a vista in the trees, of the upper windows of the steward's house.

Our friend Mr. Dingwell, whose journey had cost him a cold, got his clothes on for this occasion, and was in the window, with a field-glass, which had amused him on the road from London.

He had called up Mrs. Mervyn's servant girl to help him to the names of such people as she might recognise.

As the hearse, with its grove of sable plumes, passed up the steep road, he was grave for a few minutes; and he said—

"That was a good woman. Well for you, ma'am, if you have ever one-twentieth part of her virtues. She did not know how to make her virtues pleasant, though; she liked to have people afraid of her; and if you have people afraid of you, my dear, the odds are they'll hate you. We can't have everything—virtue and softness, fear and love—in this queer world. An excellent—severe—most ladylike woman. What are they stopping for now? Oh! There they go again. The only ungentle thing she ever did is what she has begun to do now—to rot; but she'll do it *alone*, in the dark, you see; and there is a right and a wrong, and she did some good in her day."

The end of his queer homily he spoke in a tone a little gloomy, and he followed the hearse awhile with his glass.

In two or three minutes more the girl thought she heard him sob; and looking up, with a shock, perceived that his face was gleaming with a sinister laugh.

"What a precious coxcomb that fellow Cleve, is—chief mourner, egad—and he does it pretty well. 'My inky cloak, good mother.' He looks so sorry, I almost believe he's thinking of his uncle's wedding. 'Thrift, Horatio, thrift!' I say, Miss—I always forget your name. My dear young lady, be so good, will you, as to say I feel better to-day, and should be very happy to see Mrs. Mervyn, if she could give me ten minutes?"

So she ran down upon her errand, and he drew back from the window, suffering the curtain to fall back as before, darkening the room; and Mr. Dingwell sat himself down, with his back to the little light that entered, drawing his robe-de-chambre about him, and resting his chin on his hand.

"Come in, ma'am," said Mr. Dingwell, in answer to a tap at the door, and Mrs. Mervyn entered. She looked in the direction of the speaker, but could see only a shadowy outline, the room was so dark.

"Pray, madam, sit down on the chair I've

set for you by the table. I'm at last well enough to see you. You'll have questions to put to me. I'll be happy to tell you all I know. I was with poor Arthur Verney, as you are aware, when he died."

"I have but one hope now, sir—to see him hereafter. Oh, sir! *did* he think of his unhappy soul—of heaven?"

"Of the other place he did think, ma'am. I've heard him wish evil people, such as clumsy servants and his brother here, in it; but I suppose you mean to ask was he devout—eh?"

"Yes, sir; it has been my prayer, day and night, in my long solitude. What prayers, what prayers, what terrible prayers, God only knows."

"Your prayers were heard, ma'am; he was a saint."

"Thank God!"

"The most punctual, edifying, self-tormenting saint, I ever had the pleasure of knowing in any quarter of the globe," said Mr. Dingwell.

*Oh! thank God."*

"His reputation for sanctity in Constantinople was immense, and at both sides of the Bosphorus he was the admiration of the old women and the wonder of the little boys, and an excellent Dervish, a friend of his, who was obliged to leave after having been bastinadoed for a petty larceny, told me he has seen even the town dogs and the asses hold down their heads, upon my life, as he passed by, to receive his blessing!"

"Superstition—but still it shows, sir"—

"To be sure it does, ma'am."

"It shows that his sufferings—my darling Arthur—had made a real change."

"Oh! a complete change, ma'am. Egad, a very complete change, indeed!"

"When he left this, sir, he was—oh! my darling—thoughtless, volatile"—

"An infidel and a scamp—eh? So he told me, ma'am."

"And I have prayed that his sufferings might be sanctified to him," she continued, "and that he might be converted, even though I should never see him more."

"So he was, ma'am; I can vouch for that," said Mr. Dingwell.

Again poor Mrs. Mervyn broke into a rapture of thanksgiving.

"Vastly lucky you've been, ma'am; all your prayers about him, egad, seem to have been granted. Pity you did not pray for something he might have enjoyed more. But all's for the best—eh?"

"All things work together for good—all for good," said the old lady, looking upward, with her hands clasped.

"And you're as happy at his conversion, ma'am, as the Ulema who received him into the faith of Mahomet — *happier*, I really think. Lucky dog! what interest he inspires, what joy he diffuses, even now, in Mahomet's paradise, I dare say. It's worth while being a sinner for the sake of the conversion, ma'am."

"Sir — sir, I can't understand," gasped the old lady after a pause.

"No difficulty, ma'am, none in the world."

"For God's sake, *don't*; I think I'm going mad," cried the poor woman.

"Mad, my good lady! Not a bit. What's the matter? Is it Mahomet? You're not afraid of him?"

"Oh, sir, for the *Lord's* sake, tell me what you mean," implored she wildly.

"I mean *that*, to be sure; what I *say*," he replied. "I mean that the gentleman complied with the custom of the country — don't you see? — and submitted to Kismet. It was his fate, ma'am; it's the invariable condition; and they'd have handed him over to his Christian compatriots to murder, according to Frank law, otherwise. So, ma'am, he shaved his head, put on a turban — they wore turbans then — and, with his Koran under his arm, walked into a mosque, and said his say about Allah and the rest, and has been safe ever since."

"Oh, oh, oh!" cried the poor old lady, trembling in a great agony.

"Ho! no, ma'am; 'twasn't much," said he briskly.

"All, all; the last hope!" cried she wildly.

"Don't run away with it, pray. It's a very easy and gentlemanlike faith, Mahometanism — except in the matter of wine; and even that you can have, under the rose, like other things here, ma'am, that aren't quite orthodox; eh?" said Mr. Dingwell.

"Oh, Arthur, Arthur!" moaned the poor lady distractedly, wringing her hands.

"Suppose, ma'am, we pray it may turn out to have been the right way. Very desirable, since Arthur died in it," said Mr. Dingwell.

"Oh, sir, oh! I couldn't have believed it. Oh, sir, this shock — this frightful shock!"

"Courage, madam! Console yourself. Let us hope he didn't believe this any more than the other," said Mr. Dingwell.

Mrs. Mervyn leaned her cheek on her thin clasped hands, and was rocking herself to and fro in her misery.

"I was with him, you know, in his last

moments," said Mr. Dingwell, shrugging sympathetically, and crossing his leg. "It's always interesting, those last moments — eh? — and exquisitely affecting, even — *particularly* if it isn't very clear *where* the fellow's going."

A tremulous moan escaped the old lady.

"And he called for some wine. That's comforting, and has a flavour of Christianity, eh? a *relapse*, don't you think, very nearly? — at so unconvivial a moment. It must have been *principle*; eh? Let us hope."

The old lady's moans and sighs were her answers.

"And now that I think on it, he must have died a Christian," said Mr. Dingwell, briskly.

The old lady looked up, and listened breathlessly.

"Because, after we thought he was speechless, there was one of those what-dye-call-ems — begging dervish fellows — came into the room, and kept saying one of their long yarns about the prophet Mahomet, and my dying friend made me a sign; so I put my ear to his lips, and he said distinctly, 'He be d—d!' — I beg your pardon; but last words are always precious."

Here came a pause.

Mr. Dingwell was quite bewildering this trembling old lady.

"And the day before," resumed Mr. Dingwell, "poor Arthur said, 'They'll bury me here under a turban; but I should like a mural tablet in old Penruthyn church. They'd be ashamed of my name, I think; so they can put on it the date of my decease, and the simple inscription, 'Check-mate.' But whether he meant to himself or his creditors I'm not able to say."

Mrs. Mervyn groaned.

"It's very interesting. And he had a message for you, ma'am. He called you by a name of endearment. He made me stoop, lest I should miss a word, and he said, 'Tell my little linnet,' said he" —

But here Mr. Dingwell was interrupted. A wild cry, a wild laugh, and — "Oh, Arthur, it's you!"

He felt, as he would have said, "oddly" for a moment — a sudden flood of remembrance, of youth. The worn form of that old outcast, who had not felt the touch of human kindness for nearly thirty years, was clasped in the strain of an inextinguishable and angelic love — in the thin arms of one likewise faded and old, and near the long sleep in which the heart is fluttered and pained no more.

There was a pause, a faint laugh, a kind of sigh, and he said —

"So you've found me out."

"Darling, darling! you're not changed?"

"Change!" he answered, in a low tone.

"There's a change, little linnet, from summer to winter; where the flowers were the snow is. Draw the curtain, and let us look on one another."

#### CHAPTER LXVI.

#### THE GREEK MERCHANT SEES LORD VERNEY.

OUR friend, Wynne Williams, made a much longer stay than he had expected in London. From him, too, Tom Sedley received about this time a mysterious summons to town, so urgent and so solemn that he felt there was something extraordinary in it; and on consultation with the Etherage girls, those competent advisers settled that he should at once obey it.

Tom wrote to Agnes on the evening of his arrival —

"I have been for an hour with Wynne Williams; you have no notion what a good fellow he is, and what a wonderfully clever fellow. There is something very good in prospect for me, but not yet certain, and I am bound not to tell a human being but *you*. I will, of course, the moment I know it for certain. It may turn out nothing at all; but we are working very hard all the same."

In the meantime, down at Malory, things were taking a course of which the good people of Cardyllian had not a suspicion.

With a little flush over his grim brown face, with a little jaunty swagger, and a slight screwing of his lips, altogether as if he had sipped a little too much brandy and water — though he had nothing of the kind that day — giggling and chuckling over short sentences; with a very determined knitting of his eyebrows, and something in his eyes unusually sinister, which a sense of danger gives to a wicked face, Mr. Dingwell walked down the clumsy stairs of the steward's house, and stood within the hatch.

There he meditated for a few moments, with compressed lips, and a wandering sweep of his eyes along the stone urns and rose bushes that stood in front of the dwarf wall, which is backed by the solemn old trees of Malory.

"In for a penny, in for a pound."

And he uttered a Turkish sentence, I suppose equivalent; and thus fortified by

the wisdom of nations, he stepped out upon the broad gravel walk, looked about him for a second or two, as if recalling recollections, in a sardonic mood, and then walked round the corner to the front of the house, and up the steps, and pulled at the door bell; the knocker had been removed in tenderness to Lord Verney's irritable nerves.

Two of his tall footmen in powder and livery were there, conveyed into this exile from Ware; for calls of inquiry were made here, and a glimpse of state was needed to overawe the bumpkins.

"His lordship was better; was sitting in the drawing-room; might possibly see the gentleman; and who should he say, please?"

"Say, Mr. Dingwell, the great Greek merchant, who has a most important communication to make."

His lordship would see Mr. Dingwell. Mr. Dingwell's name was called to a second footman, who opened a door, and announced him.

Lady Wimbledon, who had been sitting at the window, reading aloud to Lord Verney at a little chink of light, abandoned her pamphlet, and rustled out by another door, as the Greek merchant entered.

Dim at best, and very unequal was the light. The gout had touched his lordship's right eyeball, which was still a little inflamed, and the doctor insisted on darkness.

There was something diabolically waggish in Mr. Dingwell's face, if the noble lord could only have seen it distinctly, as he entered the room. He was full of fun; he was enjoying a coming joke, with perhaps a little spice of danger in it, and could hardly repress a giggle.

The Viscount requested Mr. Dingwell to take a chair, and that gentleman waited till the servant had closed the door, and then thanked Lord Verney in a strange nasal tone, quite unlike Mr. Dingwell's usual voice.

"I come here, Lord Verney, with an important communication to make. I could have made it to some of the people about you — and you have able professional people — or to your nephew; but it is a pleasure, Lord Verney, to speak instead to the cleverest man in England."

The noble lord bowed a little affably, although he might have questioned Mr. Dingwell's right to pay him compliments in his own house; but Mr. Dingwell's fiddlestick had touched the right string, and the noble instrument made music accordingly. Mr. Dingwell, in the dark, looked very much amused.



"I can hardly style myself *that*, Mr. Dingwell."

"I speak of *business*, Lord Verney; and I adopt the language of the world in saying the cleverest man in England."

"I'm happy to say my physician allows me to listen to reading, and to talk a little, and there can be no objection to a little business either," said Lord Verney, passing by the compliment this time, but, on the whole, good-humouredly disposed toward Mr. Dingwell.

"I've two or three things to mention, Lord Verney; and the first is money."

Lord Verney coughed drily. He was suddenly recalled to a consciousness of Mr. Dingwell's character.

"Money, my lord. The name makes you cough, as smoke does a man with an asthma. I've found it all my life as hard to keep, as you do to part with. If I had but possessed Lord Verney's instincts and abilities, I should have been at this moment one of the wealthiest men in England."

Mr. Dingwell rose as he said this, and bowed towards Lord Verney.

"I said I should name it first; but as your lordship coughs, we had, perhaps, best discuss it last. Or, indeed, if it makes your lordship cough very much, perhaps we had better postpone it, or leave it entirely to your lordship's discretion — as I would not for the world send this little attack into your chest."

Lord Verney thought Mr. Dingwell less unreasonable, but also more flighty, than he had supposed.

"You are quite at liberty, sir, to treat your subjects in what order you please. I wish you to understand that I have no objection to hear you; and — and you may proceed."

"The next is a question on which I presume we shall find ourselves in perfect accord. I had the honour, as you are very well aware, of an intimate acquaintance with your late brother, the Honourable Arthur Verney, and beyond measure I admired his talents, which were second in brilliancy only to your own. I admired even his *principles* — but I see they make you cough also. They were, it is true, mephitic, sulphurous, such as might well take your breath, or that of any other moral man, quite away; but they had what I call the Verney stamp upon them; they were perfectly consistent, and quite harmonious. His, my lord, was the intense and unflinching rascality, if you permit me the phrase, of a man of genius, and I honoured it. Now,

my lord, his adventures were curious, as you are aware, and I have them at my fingers' ends — his crimes, his escape, and, above all, his life in Constantinople — ha, ha, ha! It would make your hair stand on end. And to think he should have been *your brother!* Upon my *soul!* Though, as I said, the genius — the *genius*, Lord Verney — the inspiration was there. In *that* he *was* your brother."

"I'm aware, sir, that he had talent, Mr. Dingwell, and could speak — about it. At Oxford he was considered the most promising young man of his time — almost."

"Yes, except *you*; but you were two years later."

"Yes, exactly. I was precisely two years later — about it."

"Yes, my lord, you were always about it; so he told me. No matter what it was — a book, or a boot-jack, or a bottle of port, you were always about it. It was a way you had, he said — about it."

"I wasn't aware that any one remarked any such thing — about it," said Lord Verney very loftily.

It dawned dimly upon him, that Mr. Dingwell, who was a very irregular person, was possibly intoxicated. But Mr. Dingwell was speaking, though in a very nasal, odd voice, yet with a clear and sharp articulation, and in a cool way, not the least like a man in that sort of incapacity. Lord Verney concluded, therefore, that Mr. Dingwell was either a remarkably impertinent person, or most insupportably deficient in the commonest tact. "I think he would have risen, even at the inconvenience of suddenly disturbing his flanneled foot, and intimated that he did not feel quite well enough to continue the conversation, had he not known something of Mr. Dingwell's dangerous temper, and equally dangerous knowledge and opportunities; for had they not subsidized Mr. Dingwell, in the most unguarded manner, and on the most monstrous scale, pending the investigation and proof before the Lords? "It was inevitable," Mr. Larkin said, "but also a little awkward; although *they* knew that the man had sworn nothing but truth." Very awkward, Lord Verney thought, and therefore he endured Mr. Dingwell.

But the "great Greek merchant," as I suppose half jocularly, he termed himself, not only seemed odious at this moment, by reason of his impertinence, but also formidable to Lord Verney, who having waked from his dream that Dingwell would fly beyond the Golden Horn when once his

evidence was given, and the coronet well fixed on the brows of the Hon. Kiffyn Fulke Verney, found himself still haunted by this vampire bat, which threatened to fasten on his breast, and drain him.

The question of money he would leave "to his discretion." But what did his impertinence mean? Was it not minatory? And to what exorbitant sums in a choice of evils might not "discretion" point?

"This d—d Mr. Dingwell," thought Lord Verney, "will play the devil with my gout. I wish he was at the bottom of the Bosphorus."

"Yes. And your brother, Arthur—there were points in which he differed from you. Unless I'm misinformed, he was a first-rate cricketer, the crack bat of their team, and you were *nothing*; he was one of the best Grecians in the university, and you were plucked."

"I—I don't exactly see the drift of your rather inaccurate and extremely offensive observations, Mr. Dingwell," said Lord Verney, wincing and flushing in the dark.

"Offensive? Good heaven! But I'm talking to a Verney, to a man of genius; and I say, how the devil could I tell that *truth* could offend, either? With this reflection I forgive *myself*, and I go on to say what will interest you."

Lord Verney, who had recovered his presence of mind, here nodded, to intimate that he was ready to hear him.

"Well, there were a few other points, but I need not mention them, in which you differed. You were both alike in this—each was a genius—you were an opaque and obscure genius, he a brilliant one; but each being a genius there must have been a sympathy, notwithstanding his being a publican and you a—not exactly a Pharisee, but a paragon of prudence."

"I really, Mr. Dingwell, must request—you see I'm far from well, about it—that you'll be so good as a little to abridge your remarks; and I don't want to hear—you can easily, I hope, understand—my poor brother talked of in any but such terms as a brother should listen to."

"That arises, Lord Verney, from your not having had the advantage of his society for so very many years. Now, I knew him intimately, and I can undertake to say he did not care twopence what any one on earth thought of him, and it rather amused him painting infernal caricatures of himself, as a fiend or a monkey, and he often made me laugh by the hour—ha, ha, ha! he amused himself with revealed religion, and with everything sacred, sometimes even

with you—ha, ha, ha!—he *had* certainly a wonderful sense of the ridiculous."

"May I repeat my request, if it does not appear to you *very* unreasonable?" again interrupted Lord Verney; "and may I entreat to know what it is you wish me to understand—about it, in as few words as you can, sir?"

"Certainly, Lord Verney; it is just this. As I have got materials, perfectly authentic, from my deceased friend, both about himself—horribly racy, you may suppose—ha, ha, ha!—about your gran'-uncle Pendel—you've heard of him, of course—about your aunt Deborah, poor thing, who sold mutton-pies in Chester. I was thinking—suppose I write a memoir—Arthur alone deserves it; you pay the expenses; I take the profits, and I throw you in the copyright for a few thousand more, and call it, 'Snuffed-out Lights of the Peerage,' or something of the kind? I think something is due to Arthur—don't you?"

"I think you can hardly be serious, Mr.—Mr.—"

"Perfectly serious, upon my soul, my lord. Could anything be more curious? Eccentricity's the soul of genius, and you're proud of your genius, I *hope*."

"What strikes me, Mr. Dingwell, amounts, in short, to something like this. My poor brother, he has been unfortunate, about it, and—and *worse*, and he has done things, and I ask myself *why* there should be an effort to obtrude him, and I answer myself, there's no reason, about it, and therefore I vote to have everything as it is, and I shall neither contribute my countenance, about it, nor money to any such undertaking, or—or—undertaking."

"Then my book comes to the ground, egad!"

Lord Verney simply raised his head with a little sniff, as if he were smelling at a snuff-box.

"Well, Arthur must have something, you know."

"My brother, the Honorable Arthur Kiffyn Verney, is past receiving anything at my hands, and I don't think he probably looked for anything, about it, at any time from *yours*."

"Well, but it's just the time for what I'm thinking of. You wouldn't give him a tombstone in his lifetime; I suppose, though you are a genius. Now, I happen to know he wished a tombstone. You'd like a tombstone, though not now—time enough in a year or two when you're fermenting in your lead case."

"I'm not thinking of tombstones at

present, sir, and it appears to me that you are giving yourself a very unusual latitude — about it."

"I don't mean in the mausoleum at Ware. Of course that's a place where people who have led a decorous life putrefy together. I meant at the small church of Penruthyn, where the scamps await judgment."

"I — a — don't see that such a step is properly for the consideration of any persons — about it — outside the members of the Verney Family, or more properly, of any but the representatives of that family," said Lord Verney loftily, "and you'll excuse my not admitting, or — or, in fact, admitting any right in any one else."

"He wished it immensely."

"I can't understand why, sir."

"Nor I; but I suppose you all get them — all ticketed — eh? And I'd write the epitaph, only putting in essentials, though, egad! in such a life it would be as long as a newspaper."

"I've already expressed my opinion, and — and things, and I have nothing to add."

"Then the tombstone comes to the ground also?"

"Anything more, sir?"

"But, my lord, he showed an immense consideration for you."

"I don't exactly recollect how."

"By dying, you've got hold of everything; don't you see, and you grudge him a tablet in the little church of Penruthyn, by gad! I told your nephew he wished it, and I tell you he wished it: it's not stinginess, it's your mean pride."

"You seem, Mr. Dingwell, to fancy that there's no limit to the impertinence I'll submit to."

"I'm sure there's none almost — you better not ring the bell — you better think twice — he gave me that message, and he also left me a mallet — quite a toy — but a single knock of it would bring Verney House, or Ware, or this place, about your ears."

The man was speaking in quite another voice now, and in the most awful tones Lord Verney had ever heard in his life, and to his alarmed and sickly eyes it seemed as if the dusky figure of his visitor were dilating in the dark like an evoked genii.

"I — I think — about it — it's quite unaccountable — all this." Lord Verney was looking at the stranger as he spoke, and groping with his left hand for the old-fashioned bell-rope which used to hang near him in the library in Verney House, forgetting that there was no bell of any sort within his reach at that moment.

"I'm not going to take poor dear Arthur's mallet out of my pocket; for the least tap of it would make all England ring and roar, sir. No, I'll make no noise; you and I, sir, *tête-à-tête*. I'll have no go-between; no Larkin, no Levi, no Cleve; you and I'll settle it alone. Your brother was a great Grecian, they used to call him *Ὀδυσσεύς* — Ulysses. Do you remember? I said I was the great Greek merchant? We have made an exchange together. You must pay. What shall I call myself, for Dingwell isn't my name. I'll take a new one — *Τὸ μὲν πρῶτον Οὐτὶν ἑαυτὸν ἐπικαλεῖται — ἐπειδὴ δὲ διεφύγε, καὶ ἐξῆ ἦν βέλους, Ὀδυσσὴν ὀνομάσθαι εἶπεν*. In English — at first he called himself Outis — *Nobody*; but as soon so he had escaped, and was out of the javelin's reach, he said that he was named Odisseus — *Ulysses*, and here he is. This is the return of Ulysses."

There had been a sudden change in Mr. Dingwell's Yankee intonation. The nasal tones were heard no more. He approached the window, and said with a laugh, pulling the shutter more open —

"Why, Kiffyn, you fool, don't you know me?"

There was a silence.

"My great God! my great God of heaven!" came from the white lips of Lord Verney.

"Yes; God's over all," said Arthur Verney, with a strange confusion, between a sneer and something more genuine.

There was a long pause.

"Ha, ha, ha! don't make a scene! Not such a muff?" said Dingwell.

Lord Verney was staring at him with a face white and peaked as that of a corpse, and whispering still — "My God! my great God!" so that Dingwell, as I still call him, began to grow uneasy.

"Come; don't you make mountains of molehills. What the devil's all this fuss about? Here, drink a little of this." He poured out some water, and Lord Verney did sip a little, and then gulped down a good deal, and then he looked at Arthur again fixedly, and groaned.

"That's right — never mind. I'll not hurt you. Don't fancy I mean to disturb you. I can't, you know, if I wished it ever so much, I daren't show — I know it. Don't suppose I want to bully you; the idea's impracticable. I looked in merely to tell you, in a friendly way, who I am. You must do something handsome for me, you know. Devil's in it if a fellow can't get a share of his own money, and, as I said before, we'll have no go-betweens, no Jews

or attorneys — d—n them all — but settle it between ourselves like brothers. Sip a little more water."

"Arthur, Arthur, I say, yes; good God, I feel I shall have a good deal to say; but — my head, and things — I'm a little perplexed still, and I must have a glass of wine, about it, and I can't do it now; no, I can't."

"I don't live far away, you know; and I'll look in to-morrow — we're not in a hurry."

"It was a strange idea, Arthur. Good Lord have mercy on me."

"Not a bad one; eh?"

"The coronet — about it? I'm placed in a dreadful position, but you sha'n't be compromised, Arthur. Tell them I'm not very well, and some wine, I think — a little chill."

"And to-morrow I can look in again, quietly," said the Greek merchant, "or whenever you like, and I sha'n't disclose our little confidence."

"It's going — everything, everything; I shall see it by and by," said Lord Verney, helplessly.

And thus the interview ended, and Mr. Dingwell in the hall gave the proper alarm about Lord Verney.

#### CHAPTER LXVII.

##### A BREAK-DOWN.

ABOUT an hour after, a message came down from Malory for the doctor.

"How is his lordship?" asked the doctor eagerly.

"No, it isn't *him*, sure; it is the old *lady* is taken very bad."

"Lady Wimbledon?"

"No, sure. Her ladyship's not there. Old Mrs. Mervyn."

"Oh!" said the doctor, tranquillized.

"Old Rebecca Mervyn, is it? And what may be the matter with the poor old lady?"

"Fainting like; one fainting into another, sure; and her breath almost gone. She's very bad — as pale as a sheet."

"Is she talking at all?"

"No, not a word. Sittin' back in her chair, sure."

"Does she know you, or mind what you say to her?"

"Well, *no*. She's a-holdin' that old white-headed man's hand that's been so long bad there, and a-lookin' at him; but I don't think she hears nor sees nothin' myself."

"Apoplexy, or the heart, more likely," ruminated the doctor. "Will you call one of those pony things for me?"

And while the pony-carriage was coming to the door, he got a few phials together and his coat on, being in a hurry; for he was to play a rubber of billiards at the club for five shillings, at seven o'clock.

In an hour's time after the interview with Arthur Verney, Lord Verney had wonderfully collected his wits. His effects in that department, it is true, were not very much, and perhaps the more easily brought together. He wrote two short letters — marvellously short for him — and sent down to the Verney Arms to request the attendance of Mr. Larkin.

Lord Verney was calm; he was even gentle; spoke, in his dry way, little, and in a low tone. He had the window-shutter opened quite, and the curtains drawn back, and seemed to have forgotten his invalided state, and everything but the revolution, which in a moment had overtaken and engulfed him — to which great anguish with a dry resignation he submitted.

Over the chimney was a little oval portrait of his father, the late Lord Verney, taken when they wore the hair long, falling back upon their shoulders. A pretty portrait, refined, handsome, insolent. How dulled it was by time and neglect! — how criss-crossed over with little cracks! the evening sun admitted now set it all aglow.

"A very good portrait. How has it been overlooked so long? It must be preserved; it shall go to Verney House. To Verney House? I forgot."

Mr. Jos. Larkin, in obedience to this sudden summons, was speedily with Lord Verney. With this call, a misgiving came. The attorney smiled blandly, and talked in his meekest and happiest tones; but people who knew his face would have remarked that sinister contraction of the eye to which in moments of danger or treachery he was subject, and which, in spite of his soft tones and childlike smile, betrayed the fear or the fraud of that vigilant and dangerous Christian.

When he entered the room, and saw Lord Verney's face pale and stern, he had no longer a doubt.

Lord Verney requested Mr. Larkin to sit down, and prepare for something that would surprise him.

He then proceeded to tell Mr. Larkin that the supposed Mr. Dingwell was, in fact, his brother, the Hon. Arthur Verney, and that, therefore, he was not Lord Verney, but only as before, the Hon. Kiffyn Fulke Verney.

Mr. Larkin saw that there was an up-hill game and a heavy task before him. It was

certain now, and awful. This conceited and foolish old nobleman, and that devil incarnate, his brother, were to be managed, and those Jew people, who might grow impracticable; and doors were to be muffled, and voices lowered, and a stupendous secret kept. Still he did not despair—if people would only be true to themselves.

When Lord Verney came to that part of his brief narrative where, taking some credit dimly to himself for his penetration, he stated that “notwithstanding that the room was dark, and his voice disguised, I recognized him; and you may conceive, Mr. Larkin, that when I made the discovery I was a good deal disturbed about it.”

Mr. Larkin threw up his eyes and hands. “What a world it is, my dear Lord Verney! for so I persist in styling you still, for this will prove virtually no interruption.”

At the close of his sentence, the attorney lowered his voice earnestly.

“I don’t follow you, sir, about it,” replies Lord Verney disconsolately; “for a man who has had an illness, he looks wonderfully well, and in good spirits and things, and as likely to live as I am, about it.”

“My remarks, my lord, were directed rather to what I may term the animus—the design—of this, shall I call it, *demonstration*, my lord, on the part of your lordship’s brother.”

“Yes, of course, the animus, about it. But it strikes me he’s as likely to outlive me as not.”

“My lord, may I venture, in confidence and with great respect, to submit, that your lordship was hardly judicious in affording him a personal interview?”

“Why, I should hope my personal direction of that conversation, and—and things, has been such as I should wish,” said the peer very loftily.

“My lord, I have failed to make myself clear. I never questioned the consummate ability with which, no doubt, your lordship’s part in that conversation was sustained. What I meant to convey is, that, considering the immense distance socially between you, the habitual and undeviating eminence of your lordship’s position, and the melancholy circle in which it has been your brother’s lot to move, your meeting him face to face for the purpose of a personal discussion of your relations, may lead him to the absurd conclusion that your lordship is, in fact, afraid of him.”

“That, sir, would be a very impertinent conclusion.”

“Quite so, my lord, and render him proportionably impracticable. Now, I’ll under-

take to bring him to reason.” The attorney was speaking very low and sternly, with contracted eyes and a darkened face. “He has been married to the lady who lives in the house adjoining, under the name of Mrs. Mervyn, and, to my certain knowledge, inquiries have been set in motion to ascertain whether there has not been issue of that marriage.”

“You may set your mind perfectly at rest with regard to that marriage, Mr. Larkin; the whole thing was thoroughly sifted—and things—my father undertook it, the late Lord Verney, about it; and so it went on, and was quite examined, and it turned out the poor woman had been miserably deceived by a mock ceremony, and this mock thing was the whole *thing*, and there’s nothing more; the evidence was very deplorable, and—and quite satisfactory.”

“Oh! that’s a great weight off my mind,” said Larkin, trying to smile, and looking very much disappointed, “a great weight, my lord.”

“I knew it would—yes—yes,” acquiesced Lord Verney.

“And simplifies our dealings with the other side; for if there had been a good marriage, and concealed issue male of that marriage, they would have used that circumstance to *extort money*.”

“Well, I don’t see how they could, though; for if there had been a child about it—he’d have been heir-apparent, don’t you see? to the title.”

“Oh!—a—yes—*certainly!* that’s very true, my lord; but then there’s *none*, so that’s at rest.”

“I’ve just heard,” interposed Lord Verney, “I may observe, that the poor old lady, Mrs. Mervyn, is suddenly and dangerously ill.”

“Oh! is she?” said Mr. Larkin very uneasily; for she was, if not his queen, at least a very valuable pawn upon his chessboard.

“Yes; the doctor thinks she’s actually dying, poor old soul!”

“What a world! What is life? What is man?” murmured the attorney with a devout feeling of the profoundest vexation. “It was for this most melancholy character,” he continued; “you’ll pardon me, my lord, for so designating a relative of your lordship’s. The Honorable Arthur Verney, who has so *fraudulently*, I will say, presented himself again as a living claimant—your lordship is aware, of course—I shall be going up to town possibly by the mail train to-night—that the law, if it were permitted to act, would remove that obstacle under the old sentence of the Court.”

“Good God! sir; you can’t possibly mean



that I should have my brother caught and executed?" exclaimed Lord Verney, turning quite white.

"Quite the reverse, my lord. I'm — I'm unspeakably shocked that I should have so misconveyed myself," said Larkin, his tall bald head tinged to its top with an ingenuous blush. "Oh, no! my lord, I understand the Verney feeling too well, thank God, to suppose anything, I will say, so entirely objectionable. I said, my lord, if it were permitted, that is, allowed by simple non-interference — your lordship sees — and it is precisely because non-interference must bring about that catastrophe; for I must not conceal from your lordship the fact that there is a great deal of unpleasant talk in the town of Cardyllian already — that I propose running up to town to-night. There is a Jew firm, your lordship is aware, who have a very heavy judgment against him, and the persons of that persuasion are so interlaced, as I may say, in matters of business, that I should apprehend a communication to them from Goldshed and Levi, who, by the by, to my certain knowledge — *what a world it is!* — have a person here actually watching Mr. Dingwell, or, in other words, the unhappy but Honorable Arthur Verney, in *their* interest. (This was in effect true; but the name of this person which he did not care to disclose, was Josiah Larkin.) If I were on the spot, I think I know a way effectually to stop all action of that sort."

"You think they'd arrest him about it?" said Lord Verney.

"Certainly, my lord."

"It is very much to be deprecated," said Lord Verney.

"And, my lord, if you will agree to place the matter quite in my hands, and peremptorily to decline on all future occasions my conceding a personal interview, I'll stake my professional character, I effect a satisfactory compromise."

"I — I don't know — I don't *see* a compromise — there's nothing that I see, to *settle*," said Lord Verney.

"Every thing, my lord. Pardon me — your lordship mentioned that, in point of fact, you are no longer Lord Verney; that being so — technically, of course — measures must be taken — in short, a — a quiet arrangement with your lordship's brother, to prevent any disturbance, and I undertake to effect it, my lord; the nature of which will be to prevent the return of the title to abeyance, and of the estates to the management of the trustees, whose claim for mesne rates and the liquidation of the mort-

gage, I need not tell your lordship, would be ruinous to you."

"Why, sir — Mr. Larkin — I can hardly believe, sir — you can't mean, or think it possible, sir, that I should lend myself to a deception, and — and sit in the House of Peers by a *fraud*, sir! I'd much rather die in the debtors' prison, about it; and I consider myself dishonoured by having involuntarily heard such an — an idea."

Poor, pompous, foolish Lord Verney stood up, so dignified and stern in the light of his honest horror, that Mr. Larkin, who despised him utterly, quailed before a phenomenon he could not understand.

Nothing confounded our friend Larkin, as a religious man, so much as discovering, after he had a little unmasked, that his client would not follow, and left him, as once or twice had happened, alone with his dead villanous suggestion, to account for it how he could.

"Oh dear! — *surely*, my lord, your lordship did not *imagine*, said Mr. Larkin, doing his best, "I was — I, in fact — I *supposed* a case. I only went the length of saying that I think — and with *sorrow* I think it — that your lordship's brother has in view an *adjustment* of his claim, and meant to *extract*, I fear, a sum of *money* when he disclosed himself, and conferred with your lordship. I meant merely, of course, that as he thought this I would *let* him think it, and allow him to disclose his plans, with a view, of course, to deal with that information — first of *course*, with a view to your lordship's *honour*, and next your lordship's *safety*; but if your lordship did not see your way *clearly* to it —"

"No, I don't see — I think it most objectionable — about it. I know all that concerns me; and I have written to two official persons — one, I may say, the Minister himself — apprising them of the actual position of the title, and asking some information as to how I should proceed in order to divest myself of it and the estates."

"Just what I should have expected from your lordship's exquisite sense of honour," said Mr. Larkin, with a deferential bow, and a countenance black as thunder. "Might I suggest, for the safety of your lordship's unhappy brother, that the matter should be kept strictly quiet — just for a day or two, until I shall have made arrangements for his — may I term it — escape?"

"Certainly," said Lord Verney, looking away a little. "Yes — *that* must, of course, be arranged; and — and this marriage — I shall leave that decision entirely in the hands of the young lady." Lord Verney

was a little agitated. And I think, Mr. Larkin, I have said everything at present. Good evening."

As Mr. Larkin traversed the hall of Malory, scratching the top of his bald head with one finger, in profound and black rumination, I am afraid his thoughts and feelings amounted to a great deal of cursing and swearing.

"Sweet evening," he observed suddenly to the surprised servant who opened the door for him. He was now standing at the threshold, with his hands expanded as if he expected rain, and smiling villanously upward toward the stars.

"Sweet evening," he repeated; and then, biting his lip and looking down for a while on the gravel, he descended and walked round the corner to the steward's house.

#### CHAPTER LXVIII.

##### MR. LARKIN'S TWO MOVES.

THE hatch of the steward's house stood open, and Mr. Larkin entered. There was a girl's voice crying in the room next the hall, and he opened the door.

The little girl was sobbing with her apron to her eyes; and, hearing the noise, she lowered it and looked at the door, when the lank form of the bald attorney and his sinister face peering in met her eyes and arrested her lamentation with a new emotion.

"It's only I — Mr. Larkin," said he. He liked announcing himself wherever he went. "I want to know how Mrs. Mervyn is now."

"Gone dead, sir — about a quarter of an hour ago;" and the child's lamentation recommenced.

"Ha! very sad. The doctor here?"

"He's gone, sir."

"And you're *certain* she's dead?"

"Yes, sure, sir," and she sobbed on.

"Stop that," he said sternly, "just a moment — thanks. I want to see Mr. Dingwell, the old gentleman who has been staying here — where is he?"

"In the drawing-room, sir, please," said the child a good deal frightened. And to the drawing-room he mounted.

Light was streaming from a door a little open, and a fragrance also of a peculiar tobacco, which he recognised as that of Mr. Dingwell's chibouque. There was a sound of feet upon the floor of the room above, which Mr. Larkin's ear received as those of persons employed in arranging the dead body.

I would be perhaps wronging Mr. Ding-

well, as I still call him, to say that he smoked like a man perfectly indifferent. On the contrary, his countenance looked lowering and furious — so much so, that Mr. Larkin removed his hat, a courtesy which he had intended studiously to omit.

"Oh! Mr. Dingwell," said he, "I need not introduce myself."

"No, I prefer your withdrawing yourself and shutting the door," said Dingwell.

"Yes, in a moment, sir. I merely wish to mention that Lord Verney — I mean your brother, sir — has fully apprised me of the conversation with which you thought it prudent to favour him."

"You'd rather have been the medium yourself, I fancy. Something to be made of such a situation? Hey! but you *shan't*."

"I don't know what you mean, sir, by something to be made. If I chose to mention your name and abode in the city, sir, you'd not enjoy the power of insulting others long."

"Pooh, sir! I've got your letter, and my brother's secret. I know my strength. I'm steering the fire-ship that will blow you all up, if I please; and you talk of flinging a squib at me, you blockhead! I tell you, sir, you'll make nothing of me; and now you may as well withdraw. There are two things in this house you don't like, though you'll have enough of them one day; there's death up stairs, sir, and something very like the devil here."

Mr. Larkin thought he saw signs of an approaching access of the Dingwell mania, so he made his most dignified bow, and at the door remarked, "I take my leave, sir, and when next we meet I trust I may find you in a very different state of mind, and one more favourable to business."

He had meditated a less covert sneer and menace, but modified his speech prudently as he uttered it; but there was still quite enough that was sinister in his face, as he closed the door, to strike Mr. Dingwell's suspicion.

"Only I've got that fellow in my pocket, I'd say he was bent on mischief; but he's in my pocket; and suppose he did, no great matter, after all — only dying. I'm not gathering up my strength; no — I shall never be the same man again — and life so insipid — and that poor old doll up stairs. So many things going on under the stars, all ending *so!*"

Yes — so many things. There was Cleve, chief mourner to-day, chatting now wonderfully gaily, with a troubled heart, and a kind of growing terror to that foolish victim

who no more suspected him than he did the resurrection of his uncle Arthur, smoking his chibouque only a mile away.

There, too, far away, is a pale, beautiful young mother, sitting on the bedside of her sleeping boy, weeping silently, as she looks on his happy face, and — *thinks*.

Mr. Dingwell, arrayed in travelling costume, suddenly appeared before Lord Verney again.

"I'm not going to plague you — only this. I've an idea I shall lose my life if I don't go to London to-night, and I must catch the mail train. Tell your people to put the horses to your brougham, and drop me at Llwynan."

Lord Verney chose to let his brother judge for himself in this matter, being only too glad to get rid of him.

Shrieking through tunnels, thundering through lonely valleys, gliding over wide, misty plains, spread abroad like lakes, the mail train bore Arthur Verney, and also — each unconscious of the other's vicinity — Mr. Jos. Larkin, toward London.

Mr. Larkin had planned a check-mate in two moves. He had been brooding over it in his mufflers, sometimes with his eyes shut, sometimes with his eyes open — all night, in the corner of his carriage. When he stepped out in the morning, with his despatch-box in his hand, whom should he meet in the cold gray light upon the platform, full front, but Mr. Dingwell. He was awfully startled.

Dingwell had seen him, too; Larkin had felt, as it were, his quick glance touch him, and he was sure that Dingwell had observed his momentary but significant change of countenance. He, therefore, walked up to him, touched him on the arm, and said, with a smile —

"I thought, sir, I recognised you. I trust you have an attendant? Can I do anything for you? Cold, this morning. Hadn't you better draw your muffler up a little about your face?" There was a significance about this last suggestion which Mr. Dingwell could not mistake, and he complied. "Running down again to Malory in a few days, I suppose?"

"Yes," said Dingwell.

"So shall I, and if quite convenient to you I should wish, sir, to talk that little matter over much more carefully, and — can I call a cab for you? I should look in upon you to-day only I must be at Brighton, not to return till to-morrow, and very busy then, too."

They parted. Dingwell did not like it.

"He's at mischief. I've thought of every

thing, and I can't see *any* thing that would answer *his* game. I don't like his face."

Dingwell felt very oddly. It was all like a dream; an unaccountable horror overcame him. He sent out for a medicine that day, which the apothecary refused to give to Mrs. Rumble. But he wrote an explanatory note alleging that he was liable to fits, and so got back just a little, at which he pooh'd and psha'd, and wrote to some other apothecaries, and got together what he wanted, and told Mrs. Rumble he was better.

He had his dinner as usual in his snugery in Rosemary Court, and sent two letters to the post by Mrs. Rumble. That to Lord Verney contained Larkin's *one* unguarded letter inviting him to visit England, and with all the caution compatible with being intelligible, but still not enough — suggesting the audacious game which had been so successfully played. A brief and pointed commentary, in Mr. Dingwell's handwriting, accompanied this.

The other enclosed to Wynne Williams, to whose countenance he had taken a fancy, the certificate of his marriage to Rebecca Mervyn, and a reference to the Rev. Thomas Bartlett, and charged him to make use of it to quiet any unfavourable rumours about that poor lady, who was the only human being he believed who had ever cared much about him.

When Wynne Williams opened this letter, he lifted up his hands in wonder.

"A miracle, by heaven!" he exclaimed. "The most providential and marvellous interposition — the *only* thing we wanted?"

"Perhaps I was wrong to break with that villain Larkin," brooded Mr. Dingwell. "We must make it up when we meet. I don't like it. When he saw me this morning, his face looked like the hangman's."

It was now evening, and having made a very advantageous bargain with the Hebrew gentleman who had that heavy judgment against the late Hon. Arthur Verney — an outlaw, &c. — Mr. Larkin played his first move, and, amid the screams of Mrs. Rumble, old Dingwell was arrested on a warrant against the Hon. Arthur Verney, and went away, protesting it was a false arrest, to the Fleet.

Things now looked very awful; and he wrote to Mr. Larkin at his hotel, begging of him to come and satisfy "some fools" that he was Mr. Dingwell. But Jos. Larkin was not at his inn. He had not been there that day, and Dingwell began to think that Jos. Larkin had, perhaps, told the truth for once, and was actually at Brighton. Well, one night in the Fleet was not very

much; Larkin would appear next morning, and Larkin could, of course, manage the question of identity, and settle everything easily, and they would shake hands, and make it up. Mr. Dingwell wondered why they had not brought him to a sponging-house, but direct to the prison. But as things were done under the advice of Mr. Jos. Larkin, in whom I have every confidence, I suppose there was a reason.

Mr. Dingwell was of a nature which danger excites rather than crows. The sense of adventure was uppermost. The situation by an odd re-action stimulated his spirits, and he grew frolicsome. He felt a recklessness that recalled his youth. He went down to the flagged yard, and made an acquaintance or two, one in slippers and dressing-gown, another in an evening coat buttoned across his breast, and without much show of shirt. "Very amusing and gentlemanlike men," he thought, "though out at elbows a little;" and not caring for solitude, he invited them to his room to supper; and they sat up late; and the gentleman in the black evening coat — an actor in difficulties — turned out to be a clever mimic, an imitable singer of comic songs, and an admirable *raconteur* — "a very much cleverer man than the Prime Minister, egad!" said Mr. Dingwell.

One does see very clever fellows in odd situations. The race is not always to the swift. The moral qualities have something to do with it, and industry everything; and thus very dull fellows are often in very high places. The curse implies a blessing to the man who accepts its condition. "In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread." Labour is the curse and the *qualification*, also; and so the dullard who toils shall beat the genius who idles.

Dingwell enjoyed it vastly, and *lent* the pleasant fellow a pound, and got to his bed at three o'clock in the morning, glad to have cheated so much of the night. But, tired as he was by his journey of the night before, he could not sleep till near six o'clock, when he fell into a doze, and from it he was awakened oddly.

It was by Mr. Jos. Larkin's "second move." Mr. Larkin has great malice, but greater prudence. No one likes better to give the man who has disappointed him a knock, the condition being that he disturbs no interest of his own by so doing. Where there is a proper consideration, no man is more forgiving. Where interest and revenge point the same way, he hits very hard indeed.

Mr. Larkin had surveyed the position carefully. The judgment of the criminal

court was still on record, *multum tempus occurrat*, &c. It was a case in which a pardon was very unlikely. There was but one way of placing the head of the Honorable Kiffyn Fulke Verney firmly in the vacant coronet, and of establishing him, Jos. Larkin, Esq., of the Lodge, in the valuable management of the estates and affairs of that wealthy peerage. It was by dropping the extinguisher upon the flame of that solitary lamp, the Hon. Arthur Verney. Of course, Jos. Larkin's hand must not appear. He himself communicated with no official person. That was managed easily and *à trois*.

He wrote, too, from Brighton to Lord Verney at Malory, the day after his interview with that ex-nobleman, expressing the most serious uneasiness, in consequence of having learned from a London legal acquaintance at Brighton, that a report prevailed in certain quarters of the city, that the person styling himself Mr. Dingwell had proved to be the Hon. Arthur Verney, and that the Verney peerage was, in consequence once more on the shelf. "I treated this report slightly, in very serious alarm notwithstanding for your brother's safety," wrote Mr. Larkin; "and your lordship will pardon my expressing my regret that you should have mentioned, until the Hon. Arthur Verney had secured an asylum outside England, the fact of his being still living, which has filled the town unfortunately with conjecture and speculation of a most startling nature. I was shocked to see him this morning on the public platform of the railway, where, very possibly, he was recognised. It is incredible how many years are needed to obliterate recollection by the hand of time. I quietly entreated him to conceal his face a little, a precaution which, I am happy to add, he adopted. I am quite clear that he should leave London as expeditiously and secretly as possible, for some sequestered spot in France, where he can, without danger, await your lordship's decision as to plans for his ultimate safety. May I entreat your lordship's instantaneous attention to this most urgent and alarming subject. I shall be in town to-morrow evening where my usual address will reach me, and I shall, without a moment's delay, apply myself to carry out whatever your lordship's instructions may direct."

"Yes, he has an idea of my judgment — about it," said Lord Verney when he had read this letter, "and a feeling about the family — very loyal — yes, he's a very loyal person; I shall turn it over, I will — I'll write to him."

Mr. Dingwell, however, had been wak-

ened by two officers with a warrant by which they were ordered to take his body, and consign it to a gaoler. Mr. Dingwell read it; and his instinct told him that Jos. Larkin was at the bottom of his misfortune, and his heart sank.

"Very well, gentlemen," said he briskly, "very good; it is not for me; my name is Dingwell, and my solicitor is Mr. Jos. Larkin, and all will be right. I must get my clothes on, if you please."

And he sat up in the bed, and bit his lip, and raised his eyebrows, and shrugged his shoulders drearily.

"Poor Linnet — ay, ay — she was not very wise, but the only one — I've been a great fool — let us try."

There came over his face a look of inexpressible fatigue and something like resignation, and he looked, all at once ten years older.

"I'll be with you, I'll be with you, gentlemen," he said very gently.

There was a flask with some noyau in it, relics of last night's merry-making, to which these gentlemen took the liberty of helping themselves.

When they looked again at their prisoner, he was lying nearly on his face in a profound sleep, his chin on his chest.

"Choice stuff — smell o' nuts in it," said Constable Ruddle, licking his lips. "Git up, sir; ye can take a nap when you git there."

There was a little phial in the old man's fingers; the smell of kernels was stronger about the pillow. "The old man of the mountains" was in a deep sleep, the deepest of all sleeps, — death.

#### CHAPTER LXIX.

#### CONCLUSION.

AND now all things with which, in these pages, we are concerned, are come to that point at which they are best settled in a very few words.

The one point required to establish Sedley's claim to the peerage — the validity of the marriage — had been supplied by old Arthur Verney, as we have seen, the night before his death.

The late Lord Verney of unscrupulous memory, Arthur's father, had, it was believed, induced Captain Sedley, in whose charge the infant had been placed, to pretend its death, and send the child in reality to France, where it had been nursed and brought up as his. He was dependent for his means of existence upon his employ-

ment as manager of his estates under Lord Verney; and he dared not, it was thought, from some brief expressions in a troubled letter among the papers placed by old Mrs. Mervyn in Wynne William's hands, notwithstanding many qualms of conscience, disobey Lord Verney. And he was quieted further by the solemn assurance that the question of the validity of the pretended marriage had been thoroughly sifted, and that it was proved to have been a nullity.

He carefully kept, however, such papers as were in his possession respecting the identity of the child, and added a short statement of his own. If that old Lord Verney had suspected the truth that the marriage was valid, as it afterwards proved, he was the only member of his family who did so. The rest had believed honestly the story that it was fraudulent and illusory. The apparent proof of the child's death had put an end to all interest in further investigating the question, and so the matter rested, until time and events brought all to light.

The dream that made Malory beautiful in my eyes is over. The image of that young fair face — the fair beautiful lady of the chestnut hair and great hazel eyes haunts its dark woods less palpably, and the glowing shadow fades, year by year, away.

In sunny Italy, where her mother was born, those eyes having looked their last on Cleve and on "the boy," and up in clouded hope to heaven — were closed, and the slender bones repose. "I think, Cleve, you'll sometimes remember your poor Margaret. I know you'll always be very kind to the little boy — *our* darling, and if you marry again, Cleve, *she'll* not be a trouble to you, as I have been; and you said, you'll sometimes think of me. You'll forget all my jealousy, and temper, and folly, and you'll say — 'Ah, she loved me.'"

And these last words return, though the lips that spoke them come no more; and he is very kind to that handsome boy — frank, generous, and fiery like her, with the great hazel eyes and beautiful tints, and the fine and true affections. At times comes something in the smile, in the tone as he talks, in the laugh that thrills his heart with a strange yearning and agony. Vain remorse! vain the yearnings; for the last words are spoken and heard; not one word *more* while the heavens remain, and mortals people the earth!

Sedley — Lord Verney we should style him — will never be a politician, but he has turned out a thoroughly useful business-like and genial country gentleman. Agnes, now



Lady Verney, is, I will not say how happy; I only hope not too happy.

Need I say that the cloud that lowered for a while over the house of Hazelden has quite melted into air, and that the sun never shone brighter on that sweet landscape. Miss Etherage is a great heiress now, for Sedley, as for sake of clearness I call him still, refused a *dot* with his wife, and that handsome inheritance will all belong to Charity, who is as emphatic, obstinate, and kind-hearted as ever. The admiral has never gone down the mill-road since his introduction to the Honorable Kiffyn Fulke Verney at the foot of the hill. He rolls in his chair safely along the level up-lands, and amuses himself with occasional inspections of Ware through his telescope; and tells little Agnes, when he sees her, what she was doing on a certain day, and asks who the party with the phaeton and grays, who called on Thursday at two o'clock, were, and similar questions; and likes to hear the news, and they say is growing more curious as years increase. He and Charity have revived their acquaintance with *écarté* and *piquet*, and play for an hour or so very snugly in the winter evenings. Miss Charity is a little cross when she loses, and won't let old Etherage play more than his allotted number of games; and locks up the cards; and is growing wife-like with the admiral; but is quite devoted to him, and will make him live, I think, six years longer than anyone else could.

Sedley wrote a very kind letter to the Hon. Kiffyn Fulke Verney, to set his mind at ease about *mesne rates*, and any other claims whatsoever that might arise against him, in consequence of his temporary tenure of the title and estates, and received from Vichy a very affronted reply, begging him to take whatever course he might be advised, as he distinctly objected to being placed under any kind of personal obligation, and trusted that he would not seek to place such a construction upon a compulsory respect for the equities of the situation, and the decencies enforced by public opinion; and he declared his readiness to make any sacrifice to pay him whatever his strict legal rights entitled him to the moment he had made up his mind to exact them.

The Hon. Kiffyn Fulke Verney is, of course, quite removed from his sphere of usefulness and distinction — parliamentary life — and spends his time upon the Conti-

nent, and is remarkably reserved and impertinent, and regarded with very general respect and hatred.

Sedley has been very kind, for Cleve's sake, to old Sir Booth Fanshawe, with whom he is the only person on earth who has an influence.

He wrote to the baronet, who was then in Paris, disclosing the secret of Cleve's marriage. The old man burst into one of his frenzies, and wrote forthwith a frantic letter direct to his mortal enemy, the Hon. Kiffyn Fulke Verney, railing at Cleve, railing at *him*, and calling upon him, in a tone of preposterous menace, to punish his nephew! Had he been left to himself, I dare say he would have made Cleve feel his resentment. But thus bullied he said — "Upon my life I'll do no such thing. I'm in the habit of thinking before I take steps, about it — with Booth Fanshawe's permission, I'll act according to my own judgment, and I dare say the girl has got some money, and if it were not good for Cleve in some way that old person would not be so angry." And so it ended for the present.

The new Lord Verney went over expressly to see him, and in the same conversation, in which he arranged some law business in the friendliest way, and entirely to Sir Booth Fanshawe's satisfaction, he discussed the question of Cleve's marriage. At first the baronet was incensed; but when the hurly-burly was done he came to see, with our friend Tom, whose peerage gave his opinion weight on the subject of marriages and family relations, that the alliance was not so bad, on the contrary, that it had some very strong points to recommend it.

The Rev. Isaac Dixie has not got on in the Church, and is somehow no favourite at Ware. The Hon. Miss Caroline Oldys is still unmarried, and very bitter on the Verneys, uncle and nephew; people don't understand why, though the reader may. Perhaps she thinks that the Hon. Kiffyn Fulke Verney ought to have tried again, and was too ready to accept a first refusal. Her hatred of Cleve I need not explain.

With respect to Mr. Larkin, I cite an old Dutch proverb, which says, "Those who swim deep and climb high seldom die in their beds." In its fair figurative sense it applies satisfactorily to the case of that profound and aspiring gentleman who, as some of my readers are aware, fell at last from a high round of the ladder of his ambition, and was drowned in the sea beneath. No — not drowned; that were too painless, and

implies extinction. He fell, rather, upon that black flooring of rock that rims the water, and was smashed, but not killed.

It was, as they will remember, after his introduction to the management of the affairs of the Wylder, Brandon, and Lake families, and on the eve, to all appearance, of the splendid consummation of his subtle and audacious schemes, that in a moment the whole scaffolding of his villainy gave way, and he fell headlong—thenceforth, helpless, sprawling, back-broken, living on from year to year, and eating metaphoric dust, like the great old reptile who is as yet mangled but not killed.

Happy fly the years at Ware. Many fair children have blessed the union of pretty Agnes Etherage and the kindly heir of the Verneys. Cleve does not come himself; he goes little to any gay country houses. A kind of lassitude or melancholy is settling and deepening upon him. To one passage of his life he looks back with a quickly averted glance, and an unchanging horror—the time when he was saved from a great crime, as it were, by the turning of a die. “Those three dreadful weeks,” he says within himself, “when I was mad!” But his handsome son is constantly at Ware, where he is beloved by its master and mistress like one of their own children.

One day Lord Verney ran across to Malory in his yacht, this boy with him. It was an accidental *tête-à-tête*, and he talked to the boy a great deal of his “poor mamma” as they sauntered through the sunny woods of Malory; and he brought him to the refectory, and pointed out to him from the window, the spot where he had seen her, with her trowel in her hand, as the morning sun threw the shadow of the spreading foliage over her, and he described her beauty to him, and he walked down with him to Cardyllian, the yacht was appointed to meet them at the pier, and brought him into the church, to the pew where he was placed, and showed him the seat where she and Anne Sheekleton sat on the Sunday when he saw her first, and looked for a while silently into that void shadow, for it is pleasant and yet sad to call up sometimes those old scenes and images that have made us feel, when we were younger, and somehow good Lady Verney did not care to hear her husband upon this theme.

So for the present the story of the Verneys of Malory is told. Years hence, when we shall not be here to read it, the same scenes and family may have a new story to tell; for time with his shuttle and the threads of fate, is ever weaving new romance.

THE END.

From Frazer's Magazine.  
THACKERAY ON SWIFT.

BY JAMES HANNAY.

It has always appeared to me peculiarly unfortunate that Thackeray, who did so much for the revival of an interest in the Queen Anne men, should have been so severe upon the greatest of them all. That revival has done some good already, and it is to be hoped that it will do still more. A generation has passed away since the great romantic and classical controversy; and we now see that the degeneracy of the one school is just as bad as the degeneracy of the other. Nay, in some respects, where the romantic school declines, the result is worse than in the case of the classical school; for the dregs of the former are apt to be positively

offensive, while those of the latter are only tasteless and insipid. The poems of Hayley and Shenstone's elegies are mawkish and tedious enough, but they are better than spasmodic verses, sensation novels, and the leading articles of penny newspapers. The turbulence, the neglect of style, the general literary dissoluteness—so to speak—of this epoch, have amply avenged the critics who used to be indignant at the contempt expressed half a century ago for Pope, Boileau, and Racine. The popularity of the Queen Anne men is a sign that the tide has turned; for all their characteristic excellences are those that the classical school always respected. Their admirable commonsense, their sound taste in diction, their wit, neatness, pungency, grace, are all such qualities as were exhibited by the ancients, and have

been ever praised by those who think the ancients the true model of literature. No doubt there is a deficiency amongst them of that high spiritual element — the *soul* as distinct from the *mind* of literature — which we find in the Caroline, and still more in the Elizabethan, writers. But, then, neither does that appear in any great force in the works of those who have flourished since the reaction against the Queen Anne men began. We have lost the best points of one school without acquiring those of the other; whereas it ought to be the aim of the nineteenth century to combine what is highest and most admirable in both.

Now, that Swift was the first man of that brilliant group which Thackeray himself thought the most brilliant the world had ever seen is not a point left for this age to settle. It was settled long ago by the suffrages of his own age, speaking through the mouths of all its highest persons; and they had the man before them with a fulness which we, seeing after all only a part of his power in his writings, may well envy. Such being the case, it becomes a question of great moral and historical importance what manner of man he was — good or bad — generous or mean — noble or ignoble? Thackeray was painfully confident on the darker side of the dispute — not in his Lectures only, but in his conversation. And it always seemed to me that, unlike ordinary men, it was his very generosity that made him ungenerous to the great Dean. He had been a satirist himself, and by no means satisfied with the usage he had met with in the world. But he was one of the kindest of human beings, and the sunshine of his last years not only dissipated all that, but inspired him with a certain remorse for the severities of an earlier time, which also took the form of a dislike of *all* the severer and sterner satirists. He professed to hate Juvenal. He underrated Churchill. And he came to the task of painting Swift prejudiced by Swift's ferocity, just as to that of painting Steele and Goldsmith, prejudiced by their kindness, helplessness, and general weakness. This tendency was not confined to Thackeray. There seems to come a change over certain satirists which may be compared to that which used to come over the French beauties of the old world. They give up satire for tenderness, as these used to give up gallantry for devotion. Jeffrey, of the "Edinburgh Review," one of Swift's most unscrupulous calumniators, was a comic instance of the tendency in question. His youth had been all vitriol — his old age was all butter. But we need not bring *him* into

the controversy at this time of day. His writings were always overrated; are now (by the admission of Edinburgh Whigs themselves) little read; and will soon be forgotten.

Let us rather open the "Lectures on the Humourists" of the illustrious and lamented author of "Vanity Fair," and go through his Swift, seeing whether the Dean really gets the fair play which he deserves from a brother genius. "Would we have liked to live with him?" — that is the question with which Thackeray commences the attack. My answer is, that those who knew him best in his lifetime *did* like to live with him. Addison, Pope, Bolingbroke, Prior, Gay, Arbuthnot, and countless others, saw as much of him as they could. He was, indeed, an eminently social man — an eminently friendly man. He hardly ever dined alone when in London; and this was not because he was distinguished or amusing only, for we find him taking long rambles with his friends, dropping in upon them, or receiving them when they dropped in; and their letters breathe not kindness only, but affection — tender affection, such as only a few inspire outside their family circle. As for women, it was Swift's misfortune that they did not wait for him to court them — they courted him. Vanessa, for instance (on whom a word presently), threw herself at his head. His house in Dublin, as that pedantic and ungrateful coxcomb, Lord Orrery, tells us, was "a seraglio of virtuous women." There must have been some loveable as distinct from merely shining qualities about such a man. But Thackeray goes on: "If you had been his inferior in parts, he would have bullied, scorned, and insulted you; if, undeterred by his great reputation, you had met him like a man, he would have quailed before you, and not had the pluck to reply, and gone home, and, years after, written a foul epigram about you. . . ." Where is the evidence for all this? Did he bully Parnell, whom he introduced to Bolingbroke, and helped on (as he did scores of others) in the world? Did he bully Gay, who loved him like a brother? Did he bully "little Harrison," to whom he was so good, and whose early death he bewails so touchingly? He rebuked forwardness and impudence, no doubt, as all men do, or ought to do; but there is no tittle of evidence of his doing more than this. As for his "pluck," a man who had chid Bolingbroke for sulkiness, while Bolingbroke was Secretary in the palmy days of the Tory ministry was not likely to be afraid of ordinary opponents. Besides, we know

how he put down the "booby Bettesworth," when Bettesworth tried to overawe him; and how, during the dangerous days of the "Draper's Letters," he turned a butler out of the house who, he thought, was presuming on his power of betraying him to the authorities. His want of "pluck" is as absurd a charge as the charge of "servility" in the next page.

Swift fought for his party, and followed its leaders; but he exacted from them the most thorough respect, and was respected and courted by all the great society of his age as perhaps no other man of letters ever was in England. A careful perusal of his correspondence with people of rank long after the days of his chief importance—the days of the Harley and Bolingbroke administration—were over, will satisfy any wavering reader on this point.

Thackeray next goes on to compare Swift to a "highwayman"—to treat him as a merely ambitious man, without principle, and caring only for success in the world. At this stage one would have liked a little examination of Swift's political career, and its results; but that was not in Thackeray's way. He was stronger in portraiture than analysis—only, unfortunately when the right or wrong of human conduct is in question, criticism of what a man's conduct was, and led to, is demanded by common decency. Swift did a very great service to England. He helped to bring about the Peace of Utrecht—a piece which, with all his Whiggery, Macaulay was forced to approve. He relieved the Irish and sustained the English Church. Ambitious! Of course he was ambitious, and had a right to be; and the result of his ambition was his getting into a position to do his country these good offices. From a small preacher one expects commonplaces against ambition, but a great humorist ought to have been above them. Is a man's ambition noble or ignoble? that is the interesting question. Swift's was noble. He knew he was a great man, and he wished the world to treat him as one; but how did he employ his greatness? In the very best way in which any man could have employed it—in the pacification of Europe; the protection of the institutions of his country; the general discharge of the duties which came to his hand. Of what importance is it, if, along with such a use of his talents, he had also a wish that his talents should be appreciated and rewarded? Was there ever anybody in this world, except an idiot, without such a wish? Did the pure-hearted, lofty-minded Berkeley (who, by the way, owed his first rise in

life to Swift) refuse the bishopric of Cloyne, or Butler the bishopric of Durham, or Locke his commissionership, or Addison the secretaryship of state? Why, Addison (who was one of Thackeray's pets) had as steady an eye to his own advancement throughout life as any man that ever lived, and rose to one of the highest posts in the kingdom without having exerted a tithe—a twentieth part—of Swift's political influence. But he was a conventional, discreet, easy-going man; so of his "ambition" and his "taking the road" we hear nothing. Swift in all probability desired to be a bishop, and would have made an excellent bishop, as he made an excellent dean. And what then? The "Tale of a Tub," some people will say—nay, Thackeray joins in that objection himself. But to have written a satire on the corruptions of Christianity is no proper disqualification for preferment in the Christian Church; and Swift's life and conversation were quite as blameless, his zeal for Christianity and the Church quite as strong, as those of the bulk of the prelates of his time. Apart from his genius altogether, he stood, in learning and in general loftiness of aim, far above the average clergy of that age. Swift was a scholar—not a belles-lettres scholar only, skilled in Latin poets and French memoirs, but one who had carefully studied historians, philosophers, and fathers. He was as great in serious as in playful composition, which none will deny who know his "Sentiments of a Church of England Man" (Scott's "Swift," 2nd ed. vol. viii. pp. 248-280), his "Letter to a Young Clergyman," and other pieces of the same kind, such as his "Project for the Advancement of Religion" (Scott's "Swift," vol. viii. pp. 78-107). These are masterpieces of exposition and reasoning; and if at other times he brought in his marvellous humour to assist these qualities, that ought not to have detracted from their merit since it added so much to their effect. His "Argument against abolishing Christianity, for instance, is such a specimen of murderous irony as will be vainly sought for in all other English satirists. Compared with it, Defoe's "Short Way with the Dissenters" is clumsy; and Pope's famous "Guardian" on Philips' Pastorals, or Chesterfield's papers in the "World," or even Byron's "Letter to the Editor of my 'Grandmother's Review,'" are mere teasing and tickling. Why should such a faculty not have been quite legitimately employed in the "Tale of a Tub" against Popish, Lutheran, or Calvinistic absurdities? Such paltry

squeamishness would have been unintelligible to the ancients, and would have been despised by the grand feudal ages, which thought none the worse of Walter Mapes, Archdeacon of Oxford, for writing a jolly drinking song. But during the seventeenth century the poison of puritanical cant spread upwards from the baser parts of the social body, and infected parts which ought to have been ever free from it.

Having indicated that Swift was a mere bullying adventurer, Thackeray goes into a sketch of his life. His portrait of Temple, Swift's early patron, is admirable, for who in our time could paint like him? But though Thackeray had a vein of reflection and a range of knowledge quite beyond the reach of the Trollopes, Collinses, &c., with whom we have had to content ourselves since his death, he was always apt to view things rather as a novelist than as a scholar. Nobody would suppose from his picture of Temple, the fine gentleman and the literary dilettante, that Temple had written anything so valuable as his "Observations on the United Province of the Netherlands," which is a text-book in Holland to this day. Again it was a little shabby in him (must one say it?) to bring into such prominence the verses about Temple which young Swift wrote when in his household; or the "penitential letter" which he addressed to the somewhat cold-hearted and over-punctilious big-wig. In those days there was a deference paid to men of rank by inferiors and dependents—even when these were, as Swift, was gentlemen by descent\*—such as we have little experience of now, but such as some people (myself for one) much prefer to the loose, irreverent, sham independence of modern times. Swift wrote and acted precisely as any other man of genius of the same years, and in the same status, would have written and acted under the circumstances. This satire, however, against a greater satirist, is harmless compared with what follows regarding "the sincerity of Swift's religion." For once, at this point Thackeray "condescends," as the Scotch say, on a detail:

"I know of few things," he writes, "more conclusive as to the sincerity of Swift's religion than his advice to poor John Gay to turn clergyman, and look out for a seat on the bench. Gay, the author of the 'Beggar's Opera'—Gay, the wildest of the wits about town: it was this man that Jonathan Swift advised to take orders—to invest in

a cassock and bands—just as he advised him to husband his shillings and put his thousand pounds out at interest."

Who would not suppose from this that the advice in question sprang from a grave theory of the Dean's as to his friend's best chance of getting on in the world? But we have more than a dozen letters of Swift's to Gay, and the only passage corroborating Thackeray's view comes in at the fag end of one of them, obviously as a joke, and as a side sarcasm at the Irish bishops. It is a letter written from Dublin in January, 1722-3, full of satirical hits, and easy though acrid fun; and after expressing a wish that Gay would come and settle in Ireland, Swift concludes:

"Take care of your health and money; be less modest and more active; or else turn parson, and get a bishopric here. Would to God they would send us as good ones from your side!" (Scott's "Swift," 2nd ed. xvi. pp. 400-1).

The great writers of that day lived in an element of comedy and jolly railery, as everybody really intimate with their correspondence knows. And this suggestion, about which Thackeray makes such a solemn pother, is only a characteristic sample of their fun. The Dean wanted his friend to live where he could see him, so he tells him to turn parson and get an Irish bishopric, having a girl meanwhile (*more suo*) at the Irish bishops already existing. To suppose Swift in earnest is to suppose that he thought Gay (who never got anything, in an age when almost everybody got something) capable of obtaining a preferment which he, with his mighty powers and reputation, had never been able to obtain for himself. And it supposes, also, that he was in earnest when he advised him, in the preceding clause of the sentence, to be "less modest."

What makes it more extraordinary that Thackeray should have impeached the Dean's religious sincerity, is that he had a favorite theory that hypocrisy in religion was something too awful to charge anybody with. I have heard him maintain this doctrine, when he must have forgotten what he had said of Swift in the lecture before us. The charge, however, rests on mere conjecture. Nobody can know what Swift believed in his heart of hearts. Locke was as hard-headed a man as Swift, and he believed. Fielding was nearly as great a humorist, and he believed. What *prima facie* presumption is there that Swift may not have believed likewise? Since he chose to enter the Church, and to profess belief, the

\* A fact which Swift never forgot for an hour, and which contributed to form and to prove the sincerity of his political creed.



onus of proof that he was a hypocrite lies on those who dare to bring that awful imputation. And it must be *proof* — not guess-work, not inference from general facts, and facts which may be interpreted in more ways than one. But proofs Thackeray had not to bring — only such vague speculations as the following: "He says of his sermons that he preached pamphlets; they have scarce a Christian characteristic; they might be preached from the steps of a synagogue, or the floor of a mosque, or the box of a coffee-house almost: there is little or no cant — he is too great and proud for that; and, in so far as the badness of his sermons goes, he is honest. But having put that cassock on, it poisoned him; he was strangled in his hands." As far as the first statement about the sermons is true — for it is exaggerated — it is true of whole libraries of the sermons of the eighteenth century, when, as all reading men are aware, sermons were constantly mere moral essays; even in Scotland, where daily fanaticism has always been as much in demand as daily bread. Burns has a famous passage on one of these "moral" preachers. So Swift's conformity to a growing custom of his time establishes nothing as to his faith one way or the other; while the "badness" of his sermons is an absurdity, that on the Trinity being considered excellent by good judges, and that on Sleeping in Church (Scott's "Swift," vol. viii. pp. 17-27) being at least as readable as the best of Thackeray's own "Roundabout Papers." A still more extraordinary error of Thackeray's, however, follows immediately on this unfounded charge against his spiritual honesty. Thackeray, a humorist himself — the best humorist, as distinct from a caricaturist, of his age — absolutely brings forward the Dean's "Modest proposal for preventing the children of poor people in Ireland from being a burden to their parents or country" as an illustration of his want of feeling and "rage against children." If a dull humbug, if a puzzle-headed scribbler, a twaddling essayist, and ex-bagman, had made such a mistake, nobody would have been surprised. On the very face of it, the essay is a satire upon the misgovernment which had filled Ireland with beggars, and no more proves that Swift hated children than Lamb's toast to the memory of King Herod proves the same thing of him. The only conclusion is that Thackeray was under the baneful spell of a prejudice against Swift, and could not see straight when the Dean was to be looked at. Yet — as I once took the liberty of telling him — he and the Dean of St.

Patrick's had a great deal in common, and resembled each other in certain important points more than we should find many humorists do if we viewed them in couples. They had both a certain austerity, gravity, and religiousness *au fond* which made their comedy more piquant — just as the grapes you gather during a ride in a Syrian lane \* seems more sweet because you pull them out of hedges full of the prickly pear. They both, on account of this, passed for cynics among dunces, who did not penetrate to their interior and essential tenderness. And they both, as writers, were singularly simple in their most effective passages, and combined a great nicety and delicacy of humour with the power of producing very broad and roystering humour when they pleased.

On the Stella and Vanessa question Thackeray is somewhat fairer than in treating other aspects of Swift's life. He contradicts himself, no doubt, by talking of his "cold heart" and "bad heart," while obliged to admit that his letters to Stella are "more manly, more tender, more exquisitely touching" than any "sentimental reading" in the world. But he sees that the "brightest part of Swift's story" is "his love for Hester Johnson;" that "to have had so much love he must have given some;" and so forth. However, Thackeray was under great difficulties in this part of the performance. It is an arduous task at any time — it is an impossible task in addressing an audience of both sexes — to touch on the only rational explanation which can be given of the mysterious reserve with which Swift shrank from the *déshes*, the *hyménaires*, the *γάλαμος*. † That he even went through the form of marriage with Stella is open to doubt; that it was only a form if he did is certain; but in either case pity rather than hate is the feeling which his position must inspire in every generous mind. Stella lost only what it was not in his power to give; all the rest — his tenderest friendship, his affectionate homage, the regard of his society, the place of honour at his table — were hers; and Thackeray well asks in speaking of "her hard fate," "Would she have changed it?" Why, then, all this lamentation and objugation, as if thousands

\* I am thinking of the lanes near Beyrout.

† See it handled with admirable delicacy by Sir Walter (Scott's "Swift," vol. i. p. 241, *et seq.*). Sir Walter has written better — more wisely, kindly, intelligently — on Swift than any man, Dr. Johnson by no means excepted, from Lord Orrery to Dr. Wilde. Anybody who pretends to write *The New Life of Swift* must have new facts, or his work will be superfluous.

of women did not go down to their graves, each of whom might bewail herself like Antigone as being —

*ἤλεκτρον, ἀνυμέναιον, οὐτε τοῦ γάμου  
μέρος λαχούσαν οὐτε παιδείου τροφῆς.]*

That the Vanessa episode caused Stella uneasiness is too clear; but let us be a little accurate in apportioning to the Dean his precise amount of blame in that matter. When he began his acquaintance with his neighbours the Vanhomrighs in Bury Street, he could not possibly foresee that the eldest daughter would make a dead set at a man who was more than twice her age, and with regard to whom she had abundant opportunities of knowing that one beautiful and gifted woman had already gone over to Ireland for the purpose of living near him and seeing him often:

" Vanessa, not in years a score,  
Dreams of a gown of forty-four;  
Imaginary charms can find  
In eyes with reading almost blind."\*

It was some time before Swift saw the state of her feelings, and knew that she loved him for more than the wit and other social qualities which made so many women fond of him. He did not seek her attachment:

\* " His conduct might have made him styled  
A father, and the nymph his child.  
That innocent delight he took  
To see the virgin mind her book,  
Was but the master's secret joy  
In school to hear the finest boy."

Undoubtedly, when he discovered that it was by no means a paternal relation that the young lady contemplated, he ought to have avoided her society once and for all. But she was not the kind of woman to be so easily shaken off. So, when Swift had the weakness to shrink from that process, and to offer her his "friendship" (for there is no sign of his ever having deceived her by holding out any prospects of matrimony), she still went on making violent love to him, and settled in Ireland to be in his neighbourhood as Stella had done. The unlucky Dean "temporized" as long as he could in his difficult position — not because he was hard-hearted, but because he was too good-hearted to throw overboard a woman that had a passion for him. We all know the

end: Vanessa died — her death accelerated by the disappointed feeling which she had nourished at all risks.\* And this "hard-hearted" man, smitten with anguish, hid himself in the South of Ireland for two months. The great, lonely, unhappy soul! He had keener feelings and more profoundly poetic depths in his nature than any genius of his age — than all but the highest men of the more poetic ages before. It may be that in the meads of asphodel and the amaranthine bowers, Swift and Thackeray have met and loved, and, smiled with a tender pity at the errors which make us ignorant of each other in this world of darkness and sorrow.

From the Saturday Review, Sept. 21.

#### THE PEACE CONGRESS.

THE Peace Congress came to an end admirably suited to its short but lively existence. Summed up in one phrase, it was an incarnate bull; its very essence consisted in a systematic self-contradiction; it proposed to attain peace by means of universal internecine war, to quiet Europe by stirring up every existing quarrel, and precipitating every social dispute into instantaneous decision by force of numbers. In perfect harmony — if the word is not rather misplaced — with this charming programme, its conclusion was no conclusion at all, and its final sitting was as though a meeting of Quakers should resolve itself into a Donnybrook Fair. It stopped short of the amusement known to our American cousins as a free fight, in so far as there was no resort to physical force; but everybody spoke at once in denunciation of everybody else, and the result was that no conclusion was reached by legitimate means. However, the Peace Congress was above any such trifling consideration. To ordinary eyes the Congress ended in a confused hubbub; however, its leaders, to avoid such a self-stultification, declared that a resolution had been carried in accordance with which a Central Committee of the Cosmopolitan Confederation is to sit permanently at Geneva, and publish a newspaper. The city of Geneva is not unaccustomed to trifling disturbances on its own account, but these proceedings of

\* "Cadenus and Vanessa" (Scott's "Swift," vol. xiv. p. 487).

\* Bishop Berkeley, one of her legates and executors, naturally knew her whole history; but it does not seem to have altered his feelings towards Swift, of whom he speaks affectionately long afterwards as "the poor dead Dean."

the lovers of peace were rather too much for its nerves. The Genevese not unnaturally objected to have domiciliated amongst them a Central Committee of the United States of Europe, whose avowed object would be to upset every existing Government. A congress of lovers of peace may be tolerated for a week or so, even when they propose a war or a revolution in almost every European country. The *naïveté* of their proposals makes the exhibition worth endurance for the sake of the amusement to be derived from them, and certainly their opponents ought to be the last persons to grudge them full opportunity for a display of their interesting peculiarities; but a joke persisted in with too much obstinacy becomes a bore, and may turn out to have its serious aspects. The denunciation of the Pope and of the "most pernicious sects" seems to have been felt as a grievance in a city which makes a special boast of religious toleration; but such ebullitions are a natural result of exhibiting a Garibaldi at a Peace Congress. One must of course take one's choice. A meeting of genuine humdrum peace-worshippers after the fashion of British platform philanthropy would be dull, but legitimate; but if it is desired to introduce new and startling effects, to bring a great soldier on the stage in the character of chief peacemaker, the brilliance of the result must be purchased at the risk of unexpected explosions. It is like introducing a discharge of fire-works at a flower-show; one must be prepared for some unpremeditated and erratic combinations. The authors of the invitation should not have been too much scandalized at little eccentricities in their very mixed party of guests; but we admit that the guests were going rather too far when they proposed to make their sittings permanent. For once and away it may be amusing to listen to the Babel of peace-preservers screaming themselves hoarse at each other's absurdities; but the company certainly ought to take themselves off and not leave any permanent marks of their presence. The confession of faith of the Central Committee was anything but reassuring for the people amongst whom they proposed to reside. You invite a noisy party, and thank Heaven when they take themselves off without having done too much damage to the furniture. It is annoying that they propose to take lodgings permanently in your house, with the express intention of insulting all your most powerful neighbors. The principles which the Congress intend to propagate are expressed in the usual terms of modern revo-

lutionary cant, but may be very easily translated into plain English. First we are to have "internal liberty in full." This is apparently meant to apply equally against the great centralized monarchies of the Continent and the remnants of the aristocratic order in England. Then we are to have sympathy for oppressed nationalities; that is, the Pope is to be turned out of Rome, and the Russians out of Poland, and the English out of Ireland. In the next place, there is to be an organization of national militias; and certainly nothing would make wars more bitter and more extensive in their effects than a substitution, if it were at all practicable, of "national militias" for standing armies. And finally, we are to have "the suppression of all the hindrances opposed by despotism to the complete development of political, philosophical, and economical liberties"; which would justify almost any revolution whatever, including certainly the reorganization of Germany on an entirely new scheme equally opposed to Austria and to Prussia, a new revolution in France, and a few more civil wars in Spain. In short, however desirable the ends of the Peace Congress may be in themselves, the attempt to hasten their attainment would provide Europe with new materials for war for some generations after the immediately pressing questions of the day have been settled. The Genevese have a pleasant prospect if the propaganda of the new creed is to fix itself permanently within their walls and denounce the existing arrangements of Europe, internal and external, until their programme has been accepted. Of course it is very desirable that these questions should be fully discussed; and if the new journal, the *United States of Europe*, really inherits the mantle of the Peace Congress, it may possibly bring to notice many social problems of vital importance to mankind. Whether it will solve them satisfactorily is another question, but meanwhile the French frontier is rather too near to allow this practical experiment on unlimited liberty of discussion to be carried on without a certain anxiety as to disturbing influences from without. The Peace Congress having quarrelled with each other, and suggested grounds of quarrel of every one with everybody else, have probably succeeded in making their place of meeting too hot to hold them; and it might be an unintentional service to the cause of peace if they made the holding of future Peace Congresses all but impracticable.

In truth, however, too much has been made of the profession of peace which the

Congress pretended to be its ultimate object. It was evidently nothing more than a convenient cloak; and the invention of the name deserves the credit which we attribute to pieces of successful but rather questionable diplomacy. A parallel case would be that of a burglar who should assume the disguise of a detective officer. There is a certain happy impertinence about the device which deserved and obtained a measure of success. Some people seem to have been fairly taken in. One learned Professor prepared an elaborate speech, descanting with unimpeachable morality upon the blessings of peace and the means by which it might be obtained. He appears to have said—or rather to have intended to say, for his speech was not delivered—that a community of interests, and not a similarity of governmental forms, led to peace between nations, and that Free Trade and Mr. Cobden had done more for the preservation of peace than the efforts of a hundred thousand Congresses could do. No doubt his sentiments were admirable, and the Congress would have done well to listen to them, if only to give a better colour to its avowed intentions. But they were totally beside the mark when delivered to an assembly of red-hot revolutionists, whose talk about peace was merely a convenient disguise to enable them to obtain a hearing. And we may admit further that, admirable as Mr. Cobden's Free Trade principles undoubtedly are, they are not a sufficient substitute for the doctrines put forth by the Peace Congress, and don't quite meet the difficulties which it raises. However violent and outrageous the views put forward at Geneva, they bear upon questions which will have to be settled some how or other, and by means different from improved tariffs or enlightened economical views. It was a solecism on the part of the serious advocates of peace, if such there were, to propose the attainment of their professed end by upsetting the political system of Europe, and beginning a new series of wars "positively for the last time;" but it was not a much more hopeful plan to propose to settle the same questions by proving that war is very expensive, and involves a great waste of men and gunpowder. We all know that very well, and should be the better for realizing it more effectually; but men have passions as well as commercial interests, and the existence of the party of fanatical philosophers who met at Geneva is a pretty good proof of the fact. There are some very unpleasant difficulties impending over Europe; there is a question or two to be settled between

France and Germany, and a few internal arrangements to be overhauled in one or two other countries, before we can look forward to a reign of peace. When a number of revolutionists meet with plans of invasion and revolution in their pockets, and professions of peace on their lips, to talk about all these matters, they doubtless have a very grotesque appearance; but they are a phenomenon which cannot be put down simply by laughing at them, or even by preaching to them political economy. We can only look upon the Congress as a superficial symptom of an uncertain amount of discontent, more or less ominous of future troubles, which is seething below the surface of society. They talk intolerable nonsense; so did the authors of the French Revolution; but it is not the less a serious fact that such nonsense should be talked, and meet with a certain degree of popularity.

Meanwhile, persons who dislike revolutions and wars may congratulate themselves safely on the proceedings of the Congress. It is just as well that the advocates of wild schemes should meet openly and say what they think. They may relieve nervous persons of the impression that there is a vast amount of diabolical foresight and ingenious invention amongst the conspirators who lurk about the dark places of European capitals. It is a blessing of the British Constitution that gentlemen like Mr. Beales and Mr. Odgers have not the prestige with which imagination invests the midnight plotter, but are able to show off their paces for public admiration in the full light of day; and it is a consolation when the foreign counterparts of these gentlemen are able to show themselves in their full proportions. In fact, the function of these meetings of amateur legislators without the power of legislation is only beginning to be understood. We are gradually becoming accustomed to the meetings of different sets of people to talk about social science or teetotalism or female emancipation, or any other favourite topic for eloquence. We don't see at first what possible service they can render to themselves or their pet crotchets; they have no sort of authority; the wirepullers have settled beforehand upon the "platform" that is to be nominally the result of their labour; and the apparent inducement to every one who attends is the opportunity of mounting his hobby, and talking indefinitely without much fear of contradiction. Incidentally, however, they do for different sections of men what the Great Exhibitions do for dif-

ferent branches of industry; this Congress, for example, shows the progress which we have made of late years in the manufacture of revolutionists. On the whole, they are not wholly uninteresting; they certainly do not fail on the side of being pompous, respectable, and totally futile; their resolutions go to something very definite, and indicate some of the confused tides of feeling which are current amongst the masses, and therefore worth noting by the higher classes. The English contribution of Messrs. Odgers and Cramer is not calculated to shine very brilliantly by the side of a genuine hero, after his own fashion, like Garibaldi; but they are perhaps on a level with the foreign members in the substance of their doctrines, though they cannot give elegant dress to their remarks, for which the language of the birthplace of the principles of 1789 seems to be necessary. It is hard to think very highly of a Congress composed of gentlemen of this calibre, and from which men of real ability seem to have pretty generally shrunk; and it is not very probable that they will be allowed to become our masters and carry out their principle, for they have some strong forces to encounter before they can go far in the path they have marked out. Still the affair is worth noticing as a symptom of the opinions entertained by a class which daily becomes of more importance with the spread of democratic tendencies.

From The Examiner, Sept. 28.

M. MAZZINI'S LETTER TO THE MEMBERS  
OF THE PEACE CONGRESS.

A CORRESPONDENT sends us the following full translation of the letter of M. Mazzini in the *Unità Italiana*. We gave last week a summary of its contents.

Citizens, — It is impossible for me, for many reasons, to assist personally at your Congress in Geneva, but — and I say it with deep-felt regret — the denomination chosen by you, and the end to which it points, would prevent me, I fear, even if these impediments did not exist.

Your intentions, I have no doubt, are holy; you wish what I wish, liberty for all, justice for all, and the brotherhood, the association of all countries. But you call yourselves the Congress of Peace. Now peace can only be the consequence of

Liberty and Justice. Why not give to your Congress the baptism of these equally sacred names? Why substitute the consequence for the object?

It matters little, you will say; between these aims there is an indissoluble tie, and we shall all understand one another. I do not share your hope. No; all will not understand you. And you will find among those who say they are of us, I know not how many, to whom the pretext offered by this ill-defined name will suffice to make your true thought continue to be misunderstood. For the perception of the aim as well as for the choice of the means, you assemble yourselves, in adopting such a denomination, under the yoke of equivocation. With difficulty can you withdraw yourselves from its consequences.

I abhor equivocation. In it, for now the third of a century, is to be found the source of our errors, and of our impotence.

I saw in France, in 1830, a whole party which, whether Republicans or whatever else they might be, desired the fall of every Bourbon. But that party ceased to be when they were persuaded that for the cry against the Bourbons, frequent violators of the Charter, it was far-seeing tactics to substitute, in the way of the Revolution, the cry of *Vive la Charte!* The Revolution took place, but the people had accepted seriously the programme cry, which was nothing else than an artifice, and from the Revolution came forth nothing but a Bourbon substitution and a corrected Charter.

In 1848 there existed in Italy no faith whatever in the Monarchy or in the Papacy: our historical tradition was Republican, and a numerous succession of martyrs instructed us in an aim which should embrace in itself Unity and the Republic. But it appeared, among us also, to some among the leaders, that it was a work of far-seeing and of tactics, to diminish difficulties by dismembering the problem; they pretended to avail themselves, first, of the forces of the Monarchy and of the ancient prestige of the Papacy to conquer Unity, and then out of Unity to bring the ruin of the two antiquated elements. They agitated the multitudes in the name of Pius IX.; they taught them the formula, "Italy one under the dynasty of Savoy." From this abnormal conjunction came forth only defeat, misfortune, and shame, for ten long years; then material Unity without moral Unity, the body without the soul of Italy, an infancy which resembled decrepitude, and the necessity of a second Revolution, which



must, some future day, cut off the chain by which we are now bound to the inspirations of foreign despotism, and are thus impeded in our growth.

And even now, while I write, the equivocation becomes aggravated under the form of spiritual and temporal dualism on the Roman Question, and so impedes its solution. Italy has men without logic and without belief, who assume to tear his crown from the Pontiff, prostrating themselves at the same time before the tiara — to conquer Rome with a banner which bears upon it, "the Catholic Apostolic Religion is dominant in Italy" — to drag on to this a Monarchy whose power is derived from the mother authority, and which knows the fate which awaits it when this object is attained. To the windings of these men, who do not scruple to say, "the Papacy has no longer life for itself or for any; Rome belongs to the nation which can and ought to live," — we owe Aspromonte and the strange spectacle of a Chamber which has decreed Rome to be the capital of Italy, and yet stops short in Florence; of a Government which says, "the temporal power is a usurpation," and yet gathers troops on the frontier of that contrasted sovereignty to defend it from every assault of Italians; of a people who affirm at every hour their own right over Rome, and who await always with a servile patience that Rome, weak, unarmed, with the flower of her sons in prisons or in exile, with the Damocles sword of Imperial France suspended over her head, should emancipate herself by her own forces.

No; in the presence of these repeated lessons, I will not say, from the hope of calling the majority around an innocent banner, — "peace is my object." The majority, lukewarm, timid, void, in its normal conditions, of enthusiasm and of sacrifice, will cling, remembering the assumed obligations, to that banner when, to conquer a decisive victory, you will believe the moment come to veil it and to fight.

Now you know it: that inevitable moment will come. Peace cannot become the law of human society until the struggle has been undergone which will establish life and association on the basis of Justice and of Liberty, on the ruins of every Power existing in the name, not of principles, but of dynastic interests.

A necessary struggle: a war holy as peace, from whence shall descend the triumph of Good. Were not those European battles holy which saved, some hundreds of years ago, our dogma of Liberty from irruptive Mahometan fatalism? Was not the

heroic war of the people holy which swept from the soil of the Low Countries the fire-stake of the Spanish Inquisition? Do not all our hearts throb remembering the six years of war for Hellenic Independence which awoke Greece to a second life — an epic poem which still awaits its last canto? Did we not salute with a cry of enthusiasm the battles which attested to us from period to period the immortal life of Poland? You have among you some of my Italian fellow-citizens: not one who is not ready to recommence the struggle against Austria, if Austria were ever to return to invade our Lombardo-Venetian lands. They tell me Garibaldi brings to you his assent: ask him if he does not meditate at this very moment war against the Papal troops. You will salute with a long throb of admiration the presence among you of a man whose friendship honours me, of the head of the American Abolitionists, of William Lloyd Garrison; but will you not remember that the crowning of his apostleship, and the immense conquest of liberty for our black brethren, are due to four years of gigantic battles?

I repeat it, I do not misunderstand your intentions. The battles which you reject are not those of which I speak: they are those which, directed by castes or by kings, repress Liberty in the bosom of a people, or Justice and Love in international relations. But how will you provide to reject these? The question of the means is supreme. The importance of your work in popular opinion is closely connected with it.

It is necessary, above all, to obtain national disarmament; then to substitute for permanent armies the armed people, the military orders of which Switzerland gives you an example. Do you think you can succeed in this without a Revolution? Permanent armies are now the only protection of existing Governments; do you believe you can persuade Governments to commit suicide? And if even in some States, where opinion freely expressed prevails at length over power, you succeed in attaining pacifically the great object you have sought, would you not leave those few States in the power of the vast despotic States, which would continue armed, and among which the law of silence takes from you every means of action? For you a general simultaneous disarmament is necessary. This must be the work of a Congress of the Nations, held by delegates freely and loyally elected, whose decisions shall be ratified by their electors. Will you obtain this without Revolution, without war?

I have studied the action of the party of peace in the sphere exterior to power in England. The pacific school of Manchester, the school of Cobden and Bright, obtained from important services rendered to the country in the economical question, a predominant influence. What were the results? England had a programme, often betrayed, but which, however, gave moral encouragement and support to the peoples, whose formula was: "Religious, Civil, Economical Liberty for the whole world;" that school has substituted for this programme a policy of non-intervention which, not being adopted by despotic Governments, has lost every character of principle to become the expression of a fact, of a local abdication, and — by announcing the determination of non-intervention for Good — has animated despots to intervene for Evil. It has unnerved, bastardized the moral sense, the humane sense, the sentiment of solidarity which ought to unite all the sons of God under a single banner of common amelioration; it instilled into the mind the egotism which says: "Each within his own confines, each for himself;" it prolonged the duration of the Austrian usurpation, which was only restrained by war, and the duration of the Mahometan usurpation in Europe, which can only be overcome by insurrection and by war. It in fact occasioned the war in the Crimea, by persuading Russia that England would continue always inert, and isolated France recede before the struggle. And when the war burst forth, that school, by limiting it to Sebastopol and hastening the conclusion, prevented the good which might have come out of it, the emancipation of Poland, the lasting enfeeblement of Russia, the stirring up of the European populations subjected to Turkey; and left intact and suspended all the questions which might have been brought to an end for ever.

Will not similar results come forth from your apostleship? I fear it. I fear that it will not prevent the war of kings, but dismember and disorder the forces destined for the war of the peoples.

This day there is a want of the nerve of the mind, of the energy of convictions, of unity between thought and action, of the holy indignation against evil. There is a want of the belief that life is a sacrifice and a battle; that we are all, individuals and peoples, pledged for great and noble causes; that this common bond ought to be affirmed by actions, that actions are determined by the rule of obstacles, that moral obstacles ought to be combated by moral forces, but that material obstacles cannot be

upset except by forces of the same kind; that where tyranny, injustice, and arbitrariness reign there is no peace, but long and latent war; that every year of this dissimulated and cowardly war lays a stratum of corruption on the heart of the peoples who have to undergo them; that for this very reason time is precious, duty urgent, war often inevitable and sacred.

Among the many who are unnerved, soft, uncertain, your word of peace will descend, there is no doubt, well received and followed out — it does not exact serious sacrifices: but they will turn it against your secret thought. They will preach in your name, under the shadow of the banner raised by you, patience and resignation, trust in the slow, imperceptible work of time. They will crush with the name of imprudence every rising of the people against the reign of evil. They will teach others not to understand the virtue, the power of any bold initiative; they will substitute for it the worship of a public opinion, which is in substance nothing but the element prepared for action. They will justify with a doctrine, holy in itself, but immature and inopportune at this period, every hesitation dictated by fear, every shameful desertion, every servile concession of those who, among the tempests, seek repose and health for themselves.

No, this is not our intention.

In a world given to oppression, to moral anarchy, to the corruptions of privilege, to the caprice of individuals, to the brutal force which supports them, the intention which duty points out to us is the triumph of moral law, the suppression of all that opposes its fulfilment, the re-arrangement of Europe, the sovereignty of the nations of free, equal, associated; the assistance of all to all for the emancipation of all who are oppressed, for the amelioration of all who suffer, for the education of all, the independence of all, the armament of all. Our intention is the re-establishment of Poland, the fulfilment of German unity, of Italian unity, of Hellenic unity; a Danubian confederation substituted for the Austrian Empire, an oriental Switzerland substituted for the Turkish Empire in Europe; a Scandinavian union, an Iberian union, liberty for France; the Republican United States of Europe; a permanent international Congress above all. The intention — why not avow it? — is a last great, holy crusade, a battle of Marathon in behalf of Europe, for the triumph of the progressive principle over the principle of retrogression, or of immobility.

This is the intention; do not conceal it, do not mask it; have the courage of Greek faith; inspire with this faith and this courage the peoples who are lulled to sleep.

When at the summit of your edifice you shall have substituted justice for arbitrariness, truth for falsehood, duty for egotistical interests, the republic for monarchy, you will then have peace; not sooner.

Transform your Congress; let it become a Congress of the men of duty, of liberty, of association. Let it extend over Europe. "The Universal Republican Alliance," whose nucleus exists already in the United States of America. The brief time which remains to me of life shall be consecrated to the development of your work. To-day I remain uncertain, and I esteem you too much not to say it to you openly.

Yours,

GIUSEPPE MAZZINI.

September 6th, 1867.

From the London Review, Oct. 5.

#### AMERICAN DESTINY.

THE HON. Charles Sumner has recently written a monograph, which he calls "Prophetic Voices about America," intended to group together whatever the Old World has prophesied concerning the New, both before and since its discovery. Although the essay has about it a good deal of the American eagle—which Mr. Emerson once described as sometimes curiously resembling a peacock—it bears the marks of considerable research, and is a contribution of some importance towards a chapter of history that can only be completely written at a maturer period of American thought. Some of the earlier prognostications concerning the future of America are, however, conspicuously absent. It is singular that the very vague prediction of Turgot in 1748, that America "would do what Carthage did"—a prediction which the growing discontent of the colonies naturally suggested—should not have reminded the senator of the more glowing language in which Montesquieu admonished Europe of the strength and greatness of the people growing up in the woods of America. And even the good Bishop Berkeley's line, "Westward the course of empire takes its way," is hardly so profound as the omitted expression of Coleridge, in reply to the

question, what he thought America would be in a hundred years—"England as seen through a solar microscope." It was perhaps too much to expect of Mr. Sumner's catholicity that he should cite the prediction of the Marquis de Montcalm when dying at Quebec, that though Wolf by his victory transferred the sway of America from France to England, it would remain with England but for a short time—the most remarkable of the American prophecies,—but it savours of ingratitude that the glowing and really eloquent predictions of Thomas Paine as to the future of an independent America, which the soldiers of Washington read by their camp-fires, should have been neglected in a paper that often strains into prophecies the merest contemporary statements of fact.

The line of Seneca—for Mr. Sumner goes back so far—"Nec sit terris ultima Thule" is only connected with the subject because Columbus quoted it in a letter to Queen Isabella; though that, as well as the suggestion of Strabo, that two inhabited lands might be found "prolonged into the Atlantic Ocean," may serve to indicate the early period at which the eyes of mankind were turned expectantly westward. At the period of the voyage of Columbus that mariner could hardly have read any contemporary writings that would not have pointed him in the direction of his discovery. Bishop Berkeley was hardly more distinct in his prophecy two hundred and thirty-six years after the discovery of America than the Italian Pulci, who, a generation before that event, wrote—

"Men shall descry another hemisphere

\* \* \* \*

But see, the sun speeds on his western path  
To glad the nations with expected light."

It is rather, however, with the prophecies made concerning the destiny of America after it was colonized, that the monograph is concerned. Some of these, it must be admitted, are more quaint than important; notably that of Sir Thomas Browne, who sees America in the future "divided between great princes," and engaged in "piratically" assaulting and invading "their originals"—i.e., the nations of the Old World. It is, indeed, plain that the "prophecies" about America only became clear when they had facts upon which to base themselves—so long have mankind been acting upon the advice of Hosea Biglow, "Don't never prophecy unless you know." When, under the masterly neglect of the

long colonial administration of the Duke of Newcastle, in the first half of the eighteenth century, New England and Virginia had between them matured the forces of an invincible insurrection, it was not wonderful that enthusiasts should arise to believe that America was to be the seat of the Fifth Empire, and the old traveller, Burnaby, was probably justified by the situation in 1775 in writing "an idea, strange as it is visionary, has entered the minds of the generality of mankind, that empire is travelling westward; and every one is looking forward with eager and impatient expectation to that destined moment when America is to give the law to the rest of the world." The elder John Adams wrote that nothing was "more ancient in his memory than the observation that arts, sciences, and empire, had travelled westward;" and though there is a tradition that there was found drilled in a rock of the old Plymouth shore — it was surmised by the hand of one of the pilgrims —

"The Eastern nations sink, their glory ends,  
And empire rises where the sun descends," —

we cannot, in the absence of any authentication of the inscription, fail to recognise a post-fourth-of-July character in the couplet. The extent and particularity of the faith in the great destiny of America, whilst as yet the conflict with England was very critical, was, however, certainly in some cases remarkable. Thus the Neapolitan, Abbé Galiani, a writer on international law, whose works are still of value, writes to Madame D'Epinay in 1776 — some months before the Declaration of Independence: — "The epoch is come of the total fall of Europe and of transmigration into America. All here turns into rottenness — religion, laws, arts, sciences — and all hastens to renew itself in America. . . . Therefore do not buy your house in the *Chausée d'Antin*; you must buy it in *Philadelphia*. My trouble is that there are no abbeys in America." The only reason given by the Abbé for his faith is, that "for five thousand years genius has turned opposite to the diurnal motion, and travelled from the east to the west." This was in the same year that Adam Smith was representing the slow march of English speculation by concluding that, "in little more than a century" the seat of empire over America would, through the increase of American produce, be transferred across the Atlantic. The "Wealth of Nations," with this opinion in it, was published in

England simultaneously with the American Declaration of Independence!

Some of the most interesting prophecies collated by Mr. Sumner are those that were inspired by jealousy in the minds of various Governments of the continent of Europe holding colonies in the New World. A Dutch correspondent of John Adams writes in 1780, that he has heard it repeatedly said, — "If America becomes free it will some day give the law to Europe; it will seize our islands and our colonies of Guiana; it will seize all the West Indies; it will swallow Mexico, even Peru, Chili, and Brazil; it will take from us our freighting commerce; it will pay its benefactors with ingratitude." The Count D'Aranda, the Spanish Ambassador at Paris, even whilst he was entertaining Jay and Franklin, wrote to his king (1783) concerning the danger into which the success of America in her war with England had brought the Spanish possessions in that hemisphere. "How," he asks, "can we expect the Americans to respect the kingdom of New Spain, when they shall have the facility of possessing themselves of this rich and beautiful country?" He counsels that three infantas shall be placed in America — one as King of Mexico, another as King of Peru, and a third as King of the Terra Firma.

Mr. Sumner gives a valuable statement concerning the famous "Monroe doctrine," the origination of which he attributes to Mr. Canning. He, with the majority of American writers on this subject, fails to note that a general view of the superior rights of the United States on that continent was expressed by the First Napoleon when he sold to President Jefferson the greater part of the valley of the Mississippi, in terms that acknowledge the "Monroe doctrine." Nevertheless, there seems no doubt that President Monroe received the theory from Canning. Earnestly engaged in resisting the designs of the Holy Alliance, Mr. Canning sought to enlist the United States in the same policy, and to that end represented to the American Minister in London, Mr. Rush, that America, equally with Europe, was endangered by the ambitious schemes of the Alliance. It was in almost the very language used by Mr. Canning that Mr. Monroe presently declared that his country would consider any attempt on the part of European Governments "to extend their systems to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety," and that it could not look upon any attempts at oppressing

or controlling Governments in America, whose independence they had recognised, "in any other light than as a manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States." There was a burst of applause in England when this position was taken; and Mr. Canning, in reviewing the course of affairs in 1826, before the House of Commons, said in triumph, — "I called the New World into existence to redress the balance of the Old."

We have omitted many of the "prophecies," especially the modern ones. Some of them are hardly more significant than the exclamations which Voltaire describes as blown through bassoons at the distinguished Monsieur. "How entirely must Monsieur be satisfied with himself!" Any amount of eulogy will leave our relatives across the ocean just what they are. But there runs through much of the recent writing and speaking that come to us from America a tone that indicates a recurrence of the old idea of "manifest destiny," which seems to us far from healthy. In the days whose unhappy memory is still fresh, when the American Congress "passed," as Theodore Parker put it, "a deliberate lie — that 'war existed by the act of Mexico,'" and proceeded to seize Texas and other vast regions, which brought all manner of strife into the Union with them, and have since been battle-fields, we heard much about "manifest destiny." The rulers and chief politicians of that period did not hesitate to declare that America in that invasion was only fulfilling her destiny of spreading over the North American continent. Fortunately, those who ruled America on such principles proved intolerable to the honest masses of the nation, and have long been superseded. It is discouraging to witness now in any quarter a disposition to revive that lust for mere expansion, and to find the leading senator of New England — the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of Congress — boasting that one of his prophets, a Mexican, opens the door to Americans, and asking when will Canada be ripe. Nor is this feeling quite removed when Mr. Sumner says, "It is easy to see that empire obtained by force is unrepugnant." All of the senator's countrymen may not share his philosophical opinions in this matter. Is not the area of the United States big enough? With one or two millions of square miles of uncultured or totally wild lands, is it a worthy aim to be coveting even the ice-dens of grizzly bears in Walrusia?

America no doubt has a great destiny,

but her deadliest enemy could contrive no surer way of baulking it or of delaying its fulfilment, than to induce her to set about fulfilling a cut-and-dried plan of development. The Old World, overcrowded and hampered in movement, has naturally projected its own ideals and hopes upon the fresh and wide canvas of the New; but it were a lame conclusion that America should be fettered by these. The genius who planned that continent has, possibly, designs of his own — designs more magnificent, it may be, than those of Berkeley or Galiani. The sum of nearly all the prophets quoted by Mr. Sumner is, that America is to extend over North America, to contain teeming millions of population, and to excel the Old World in its own arts and powers. But after all it would be but a gigantic duplicate of the Old World, and therefore hardly a *New World* at all. We do not believe in this theory of national predestination. We believe that the destiny of America is to be freshly moulded in the hearts and brains of her people; that she may be debased by national profligacy, or raised by the virtues of her people. A big country did not imply a noble people when the Indians occupied an unlimited America, and it will not now; other aims and characteristics must make good Berkeley's words —

"Time's noblest offspring is the last."

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From the Saturday Review, Oct. 5.

#### FRANCE AND ITALY.

It is time for the French Government seriously to reconsider its recent Italian policy. The King of ITALY is justified by common sense in his belief that it will be impossible to continue indefinitely the present arrangements between himself and the EMPEROR. That the September Convention could ever hope to be a permanent solution of the Papal question was not even pretended during the course of the negotiations which led to it. At the time of the conclusion of the treaty, both contracting Powers had the strongest reasons for desiring that the French occupation of Rome should cease. The chief difficulty was to devise some colourable plan by which France might withdraw her flag with dignity, and without the semblance of abandon-



ing the POPE in his despair. Besides this primary anxiety for appearances, the French EMPEROR had other feelings on the subject of Rome of which he has never divested himself. He was not prepared, personally or politically, to break with the great system of Catholic Christianity which has long since had for its nucleus the POPE's autonomy at Rome. A man of the penetration of the French EMPEROR cannot fail to have remarked, what everybody else sees, that the religious faith of all Europe is about to undergo a vast change; but, looking at the prospect as an Emperor and a family man, he did not intend or care to throw his weight into the anti-Catholic scale. He then hoped, and possibly still hopes, that a happy accident might yet reconcile the Church to Italy, and that Time might come to the rescue and make some scheme seem possible for leaving the POPE in Rome. It is easy to assert, because difficult to disprove, that he had also other ambiguous motives which led him to wish to put off the evil day when Rome should belong to Italy. The object, at all events, of the French Government in the September Convention was to delay, not to solve, the Roman question. The one thing to be secured was the temporary relief; the future fate of the Papacy, and the future conduct of the respective Governments, remained uncertain and in blank. To remove the French troops from Rome, without fear of any Italian annexation to follow, was the main ambition of the diplomatists engaged; and *permitte Divis cetera* was the text tacitly adopted for their motto. That the September Convention was designed to adjourn, not to settle, the difficulty is conclusively proved by one clear and indisputable fact. The certain contingency of an internal insurrection at Rome was deliberately left unprovided for. The two Governments did not, and knew they could not, agree about it, and, sooner than interrupt their immediate combinations, they agreed not to discuss it at all. Thus it became obvious that the September Convention provided for the necessities of the day, but did not profess to make any permanent provision for the morrow.

The Florence Cabinet is not therefore receding from its engagements in pointing out to France that it is not possible, without danger of real disturbances in Italy, to leave matters any longer in their perilous condition of uncertainty. The arrest of General GARIBALDI was a bold act of international good faith. The sense of the Italian nation has on the whole accepted,

on the ground of sheer necessity, a proceeding the legality of which appears to be doubtful; and an Italian Chamber composed of even more immaculate elements than the present would not perhaps hesitate to indemnify the RATTAZZI Ministry against the consequences of their courage. But if the Italian Chamber meets for this Patriotic purpose, the first question it will ask the Government will be, How long is this to go on? The country has been on the very brink of a precipice. Sufficient popular agitation has ensued to show that, in arresting the favourite champion of the Italian revolution, the Italian monarchy has braved, even if it has weathered, a very considerable storm. It is absurd to expect that the Italians can run these formidable risks every other year merely to suit the policy of the French Empire. It may be said, and it is doubtless often said in Conservative circles, that Rome is not to be handed over to Italy simply because the King of ITALY cannot govern his unruly subjects without it. Of course these things are a question of degree. The Fenians want Ireland, the Poles want Poland, the Danes want Schleswig-Holstein, and France wants the frontier of the Rhine. It is not so much because Italy wants Rome that she deserves to obtain it, as because the want is acknowledged by the public opinion of Europe to be reasonable. When this is so, the Italians cannot but feel themselves injured by finding that, in return for the benefits she has done them, France requires them to sacrifice their national hopes. The revolutionary party will not consent to do it. And the effort to check her advanced patriots costs Italy so much, keeps her in such perpetual anxiety and suspense, and is so damaging to the popularity of the monarchy, that the national patience is becoming exhausted. The French must make up their mind what they will do. They must choose between the friendship and the covert enmity of a Power which is now strong enough to be a useful ally, and which is determined not to bestow its favours for nothing.

NAPOLEON III. is in no easy position. The Austrian and the Italian alliances are both necessary for his purposes. And he has every reason to dread the success of the Italian democratic party. General GARIBALDI represents in Italy the anti-French school. The men with whom GARIBALDI acts, and by whom he is guided, regard LOUIS NAPOLEON as a sort of incarnate enemy of freedom. They cannot forgive him either his usurpations at home or his military expeditions abroad. The

EMPEROR is aware of, and fully reciprocates, this antipathy. Giving Rome to Italy is, in his eyes, helping the Italian revolutionists one stage upon their journey. Possibly he is right in thinking that this will be in the end the effect of such a step. But the Roman question has now reached a point at which further opposition on the part of France becomes injurious both to French interests and to the cause of monarchical institutions in the peninsula. Something must be done; and the only doubt is whether NAPOLEON III. is capable of surrendering his crotchets about Italy, and loyally endeavouring to establish Italian order on a firm basis.

The abortive raid of General GARIBOLDI will therefore do some service to the cause which he prefers both to life and to reputation. It is useless to talk of settling the Papal question by a European Congress. If Italy is well advised, she will never consent to so suicidal a proposal. The whole key to the future tranquillity of her provinces lies with the Imperial Government at Paris. Do what it may, the French Empire cannot make the temporal power last beyond the EMPEROR'S lifetime. By threats of intervention NAPOLEON III. may screw up the Florence Cabinet to stay action against individual adventurers. But the passion for Rome has possessed the people too completely to be eradicated now; and in the long run the popular adventurers who profess to be its exponents will be too strong for the more moderate Liberals. France, if she is wise, will endeavour to arrange the matter while she can still arrange it on her own terms. The time is fast approaching when she will be unable to dictate terms at all to Italy — when VICTOR EMMANUEL must break decisively with France, or with his own subjects.

#### CHANSON WITHOUT MUSIC.

BY THE PROFESSOR EMERITUS OF DEAD AND LIVE LANGUAGES.

(Φ. B. K. — CAMBRIDGE, 1867.)

You bid me sing, — can I forget

The classic ode of days gone by, —

How belle Fifine and jeune Lisette

Exclaimed, "Anacréon, geron ei?"

"Regardez donc," those ladies said, —

"You're getting bald and wrinkled too:

When summer's roses all are shed,

Love's nulium ite, voyez-vous!"

In vain ye brave Anacreons' cry,

"Of Love alone my banjo sings"

(Eröta mounon). "Etiam si, —

Eh bien?" replied the saucy things, —

"Go find a maid whose hair is gray,

And strike your lyre, — we shan't complain;

But parce nous, s'il vous plait, —

Voilà Adolphe! Voilà Eugène!"

Ah, jeune Lisette! Ah, belle Fifine!

Anacreon's lessons all must learn;

"O kinos oxüs; Spring is green,

But Acer Hyems waits his turn!

I hear you whispering from the dust,

"Tiens, mon cher, c'est toujours so, —

The brightest blade grows dim with rust,

The fairest meadow white with snow!"

You do not mean it! *Not encore?*

*Another string of playday rhymes?*

You've heard me — nonne est? — before,

Multoties, — more than twenty times;

Non possum, — vraiment, — pas du tout,

I cannot! I am loth to shirk;

But who will listen if I do,

My memory makes such shocking work?

Ginösko. Scio. Yes, I'm told

Some ancients like my rusty lay,

As Grandpa Noah loved the old

Red sandstone march of Jubal's day.

I used to carol like the birds,

But time my wits has quite unfixed,

Et quoad verba, — for my words, —

Ciel! Eheu! Whe-ew — how they're mixed!

Meherole! Zeu! Diable! how

My thoughts were dressed when I was young,

But tempus fugit! see them now

Half clad in rags of every tongue!

O philoi, fratres, chers amis!

I dare not court the youthful Muse,

For fear her sharp response should be,

"Papa Anacreon, please excuse!"

Adieu! I've trod my annual track

How long! — let others count the miles, —

And peddled out my rhyming pack

To friends who always paid in smiles.

So, laissez-moi! some youthful wit

No doubt has wares he wants to show;

And I am asking, "Let me sit."

Dum ille clamat, "Dos pou sto!"

O. W. Holmes.

*Atlantic Monthly.*

THE ZU-LULOGICAL DIFFICULTY. — THE Bishops with regard to DR. COLENSO are like the celebrated Parrot — they don't speak but they "think the more." — *Punch.*